

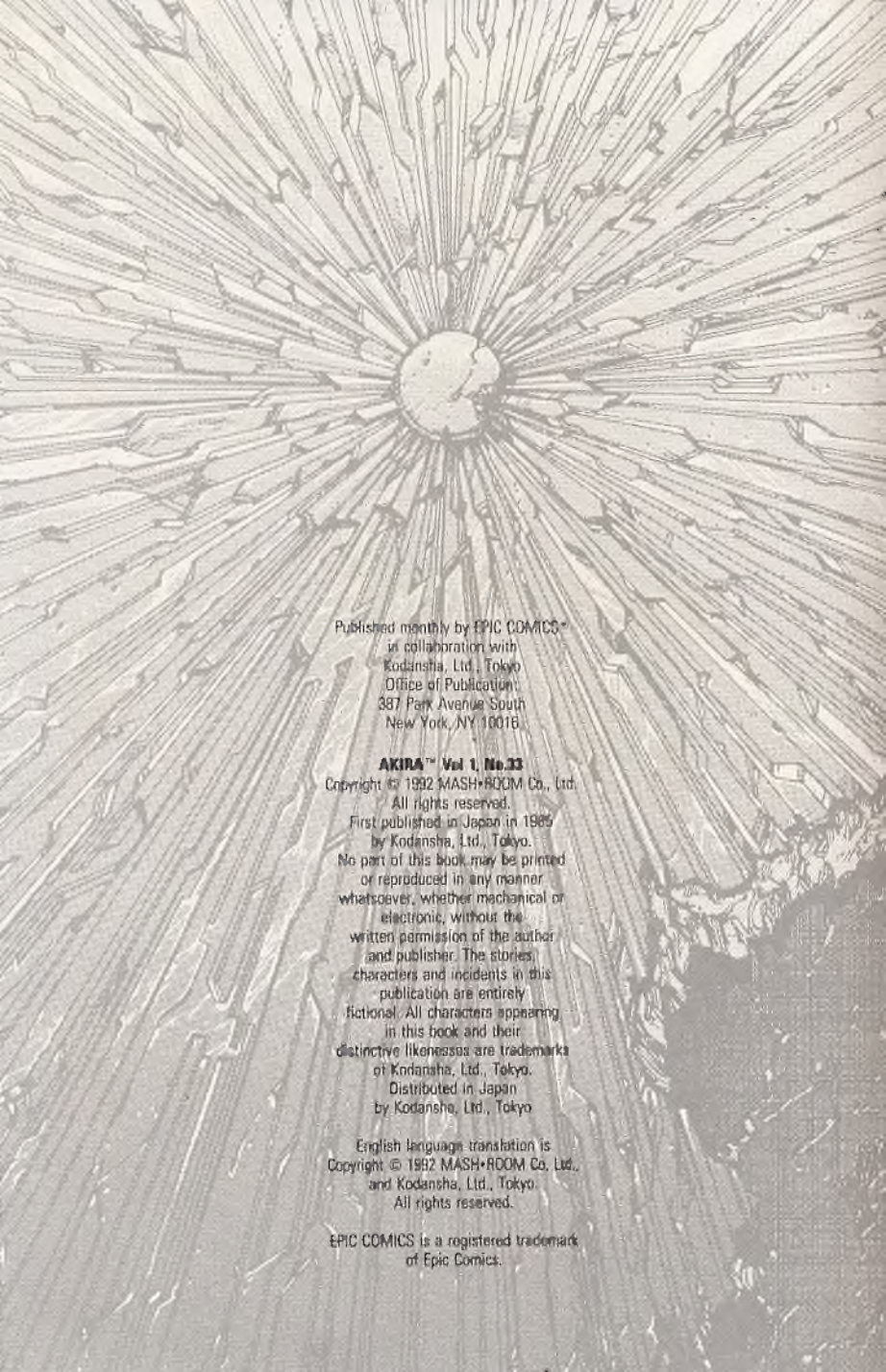
AKIRA

33™



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

EPIC COMICS • \$3.95 • \$4.75 (CAN) • VOL. 1, NO. 33



Published monthly by EPIC COMICS®
in collaboration with
Kodansha, Ltd., Tokyo
Office of Publication
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10018

AKIRA™ Vol. 1, No.33

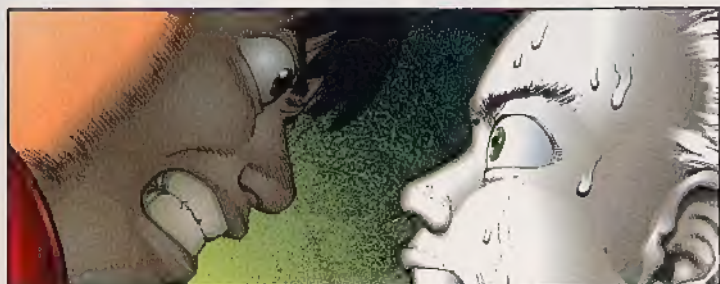
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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 33

STRIKE FROM SPACE

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

2030. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, one-time leader of a delinquent gang, is caught up in the aftermath of a power struggle between a Japanese military research organization — led by a man known only as the **Colonel** — and a resistance group whose members included **Kay**, **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**.

The **Colonel** had a number of psychic children under his control. Each is identified by a numbered tattoo on the hand. Among the children were **Kiyoko** and **Masaru** — **Numbers 25** and **27**. The blind **Lady Miyako** — **Number 19** — was once among their ranks but now heads a great religious cult. **Number 41** is **Tetsuo**, once Kaneda's friend, but now his greatest enemy. **Tetsuo** lost his left arm to a laser blast from the Colonel's military satellite **SOL**, and has used cybernetics and telekinesis to fabricate for himself a prosthetic replacement.

Most powerful of all the

children is **Number 28** — **Akira**. He is a docile and enigmatic boy who was placed in a cryogenic sleep almost forty years ago when he started the World War III with a mental blast. He was recently reawakened by **Tetsuo**, and again he devastated the reconstructed city of **Neo-Tokyo**. Now Japan exists in a state of emergency. The forces of the army and the resistance are scattered, and the military's formidable "caretaker robots" patrol the streets.

In the western part of **Neo-Tokyo** the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed — a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units to defend their land. To increase the Empire's power, **Tetsuo** uses drugs and training to develop psychic abilities in certain of the subjects. Most faithful among their numerous followers are **Tetsuo's** girlfriend, **Kaori**, and his dapper ambitious assistant. Their headquarters is Neo-Tokyo's **Olympic Stadium**. To the east, **Lady**



Kaori



Kiyoko



Akira



Masaru



Miyako welcomes refugees to her shrine. In this, she is aided by **Kiyoko**, **Masaru**, and a number of loyal psychically gifted monks.

The **Empire** is infiltrated by teams of spies and commando units from the outside world, led by American Lieutenant **George Yamada**. **Yamada** is under orders to assassinate **Akira**, even if it means taking innocent lives. To that end, he and his men are equipped with biochemical armaments which take a tremendous toll on **Tetsuo's** trained psychics when the two groups meet in battle.

A fleet of foreign ships waits in **Tokyo Bay**, poised for action. Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists and one Tibetan monk study the **Akira**

phenomenon — which they've codenamed **Juvenile A**. One of the scientists — **Stanley Simmons** — goes ashore without military authorization, hoping desperately to implement a secret plan.

Meanwhile, **Lady Miyako**, **Masaru**, and **Kiyoko** convince **Kay** to join them in battle against **Tetsuo**, because **Kay** is a powerful medium through whom the others could project their powers and strike as one.

Kaneda, who's teamed up with **Kai** and **Joker** — a friend and a rival from his gang days — vows to kill **Tetsuo**, using most of their men, as well as such state-of-the-art weapons as they've salvaged, including laser rifles, flying platforms, and one caretaker robot. At the **Olympic Stadium**, they



Tetsuo



The Colonel



Kai



Lt. Yamada

find destruction and chaos. Their enemy is already under attack by **Kay**, Yamada's forces, the **Colonel**, and even by Tetsuo's own men. Tetsuo's lieutenant is so afraid of his leader's power, he tries to flee, murdering **Kaori** so she can't betray him.

Tetsuo loses control in battle, and his artificial arm assumes a grossly mutated form. He runs amok, killing anyone who comes too close. His power has grown beyond what his body can contain and is now trying to absorb its surroundings. His body begins to alternate between a normal human form and an immense, uncontrollable, bloated grotesquerie.

Tetsuo finds and is mourning over **Kaori** when his lieutenant comes to him, cravenly pleading for help against Yamada's forces. The lieutenant and his loyalists die horribly, victims of the biochem weapons, while **Akira** looks placidly on. When **Yamada** shoots **Tetsuo**, **Tetsuo** is enraged, and **Yamada** dies a hideous death.

Ironically, the germs in the weapon affect **Tetsuo** like a drug, enabling him to

reassert mastery over his powers. A duel in the stadium ensues, with **Kay** and **Kaneda** using lasers and telekinesis against their enemy. **Kaneda** sends **Kai** to safety with **Akira**, and **Kai** hands the boy over to another gang member, hoping to find **Joker** and return to the fray.

Then, the international fleet in the harbor sends fighter planes to rain death upon **Neo-Tokyo**.



Kaneda



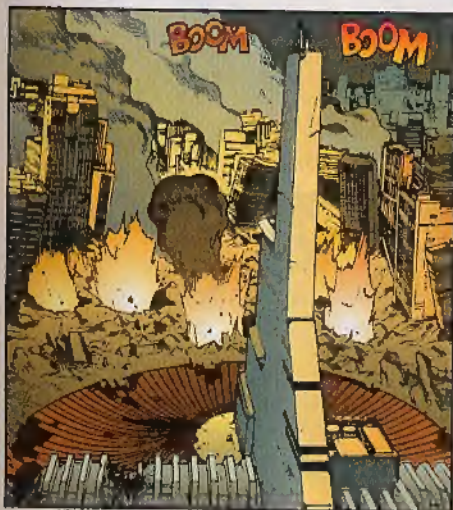
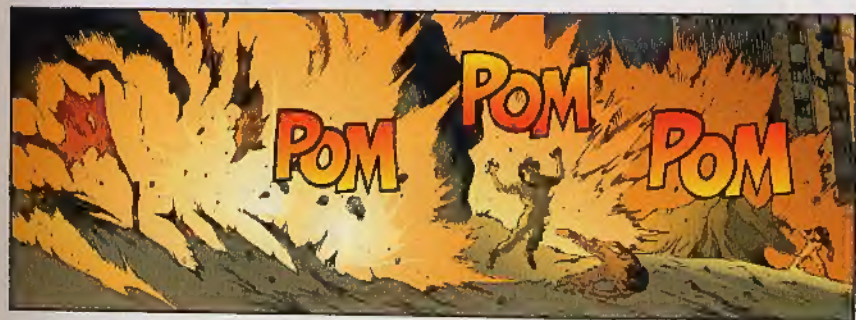
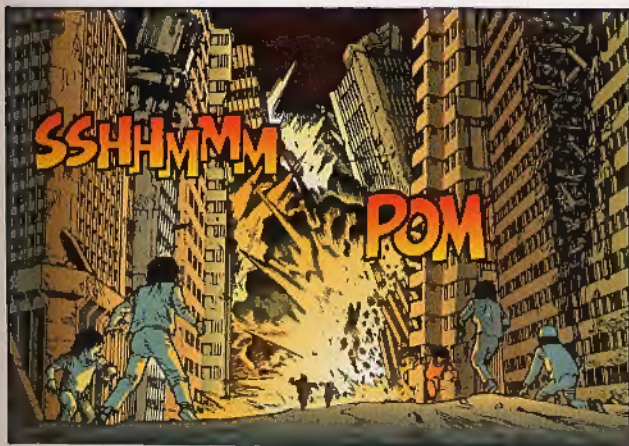
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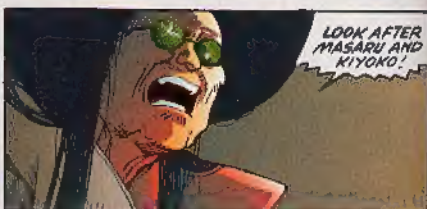


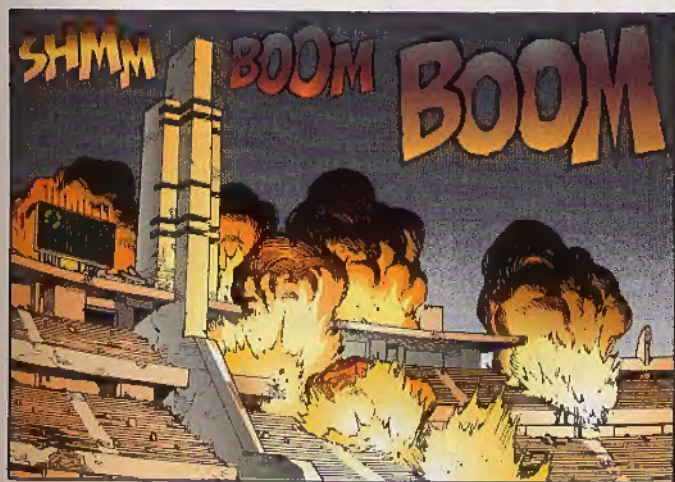
Stanley Simmons

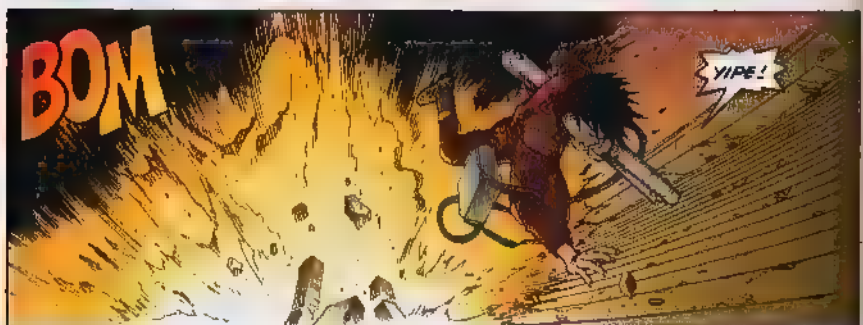
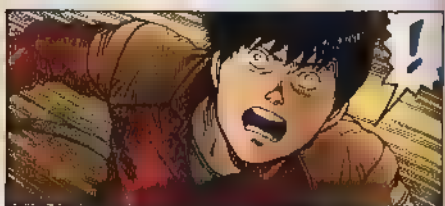
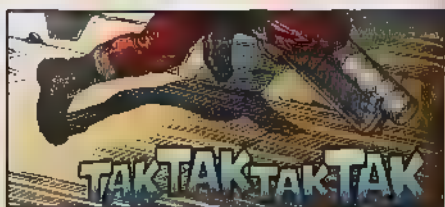


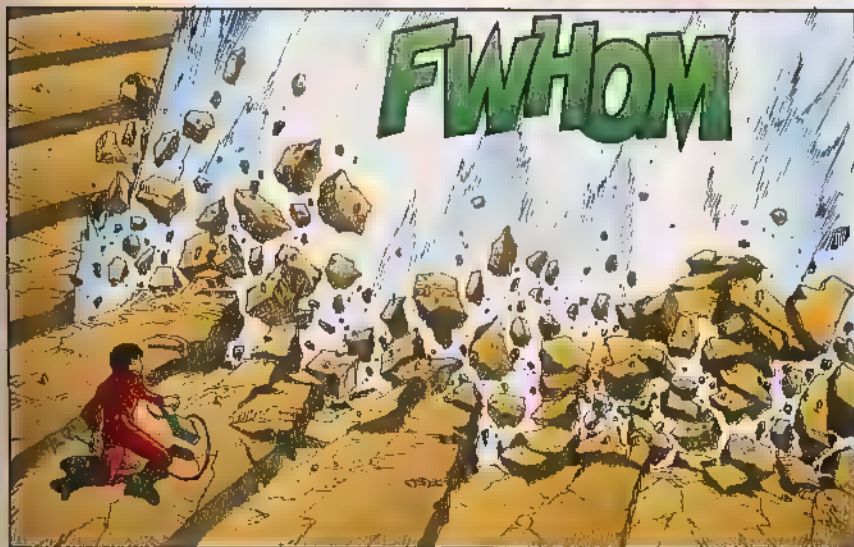
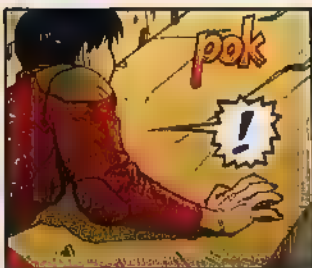
Joker

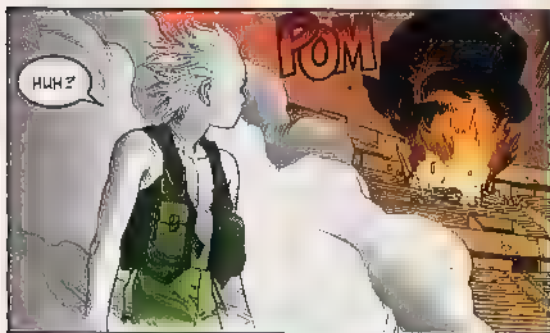
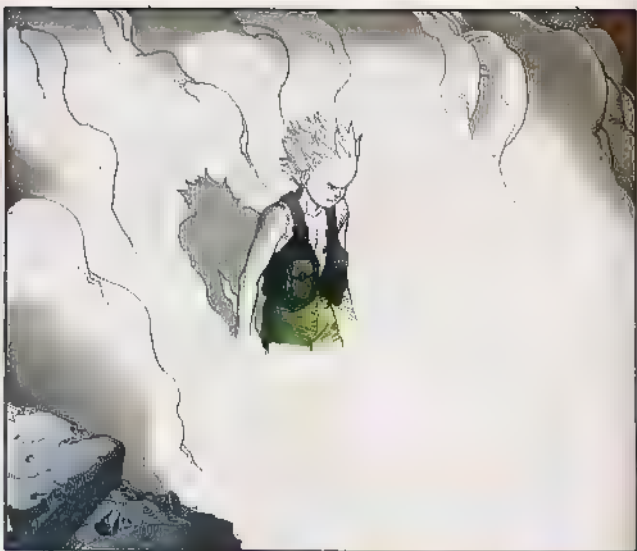
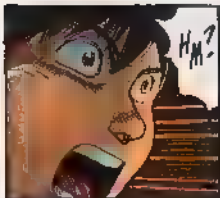


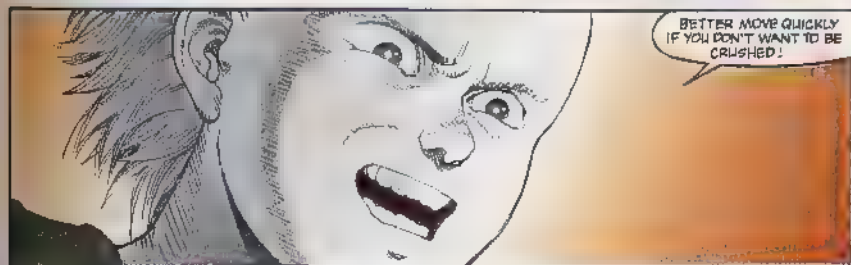
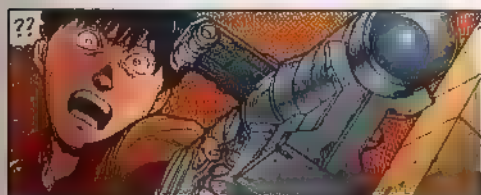
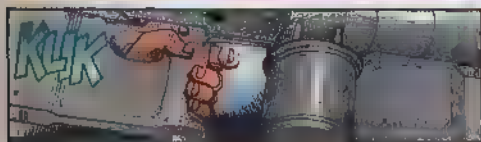
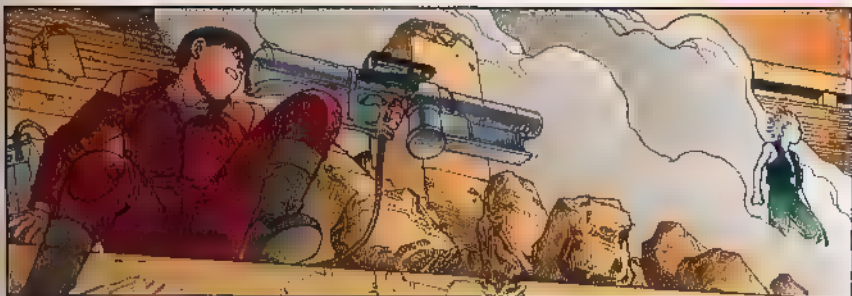


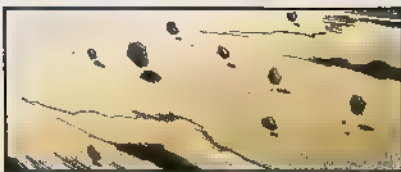
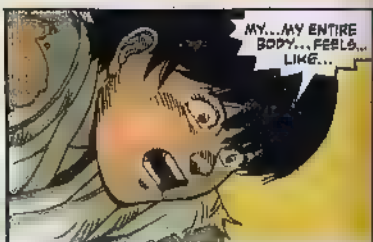
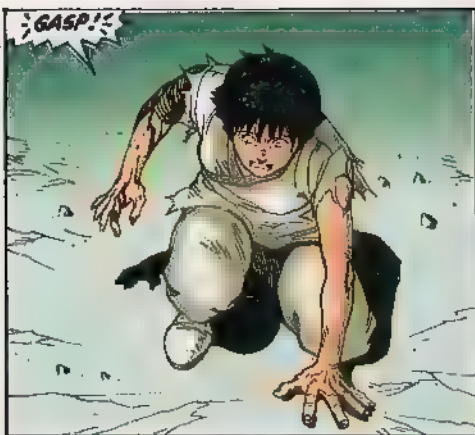


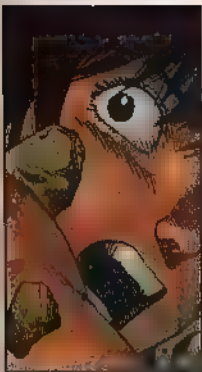


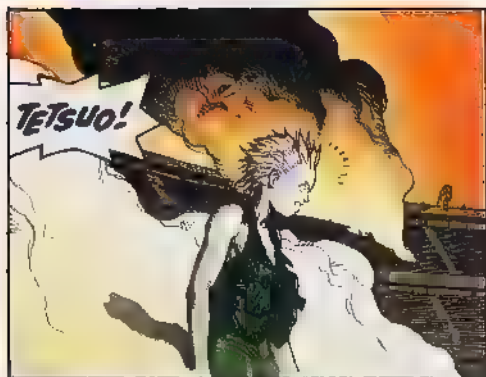


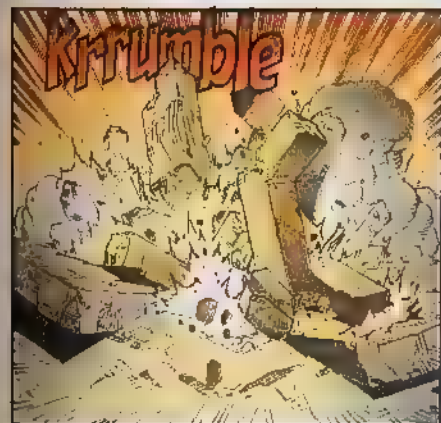
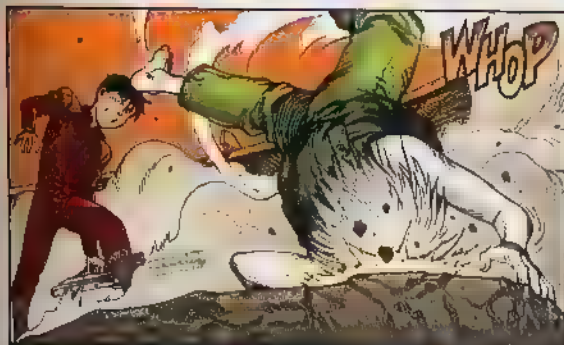
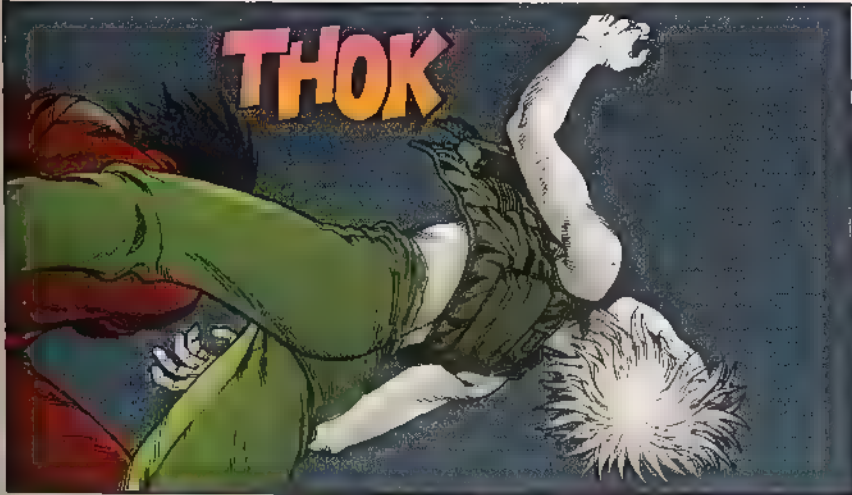


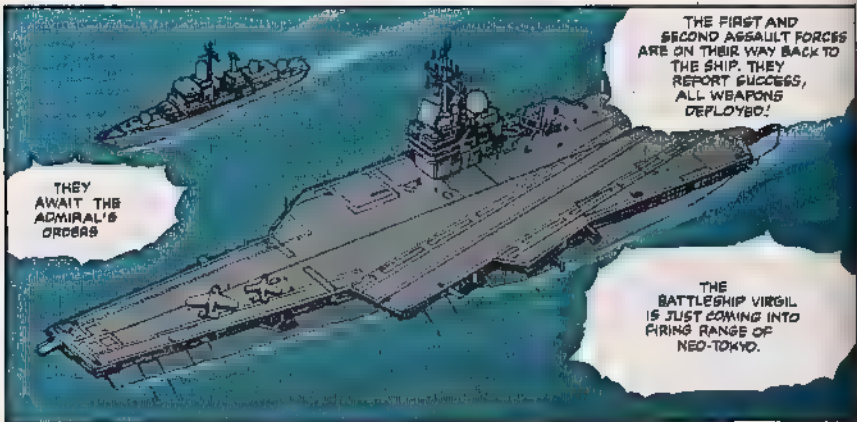












THEY
AWAIT THE
ADMIRAL'S
ORDERS

THE FIRST AND
SECOND ASSAULT FORCES
ARE ON THEIR WAY BACK TO
THE SHIP. THEY
REPORT SUCCESS,
ALL WEAPONS
DEPLOYED!

THE
BATTLESHIP VIRGIL
IS JUST COMING INTO
FIRING RANGE OF
NEO-TOKYO.



TELL THEM TO
LAUNCH AN
ATTACK ON THE
CITY
AT ONCE.

AYE,
SIR!



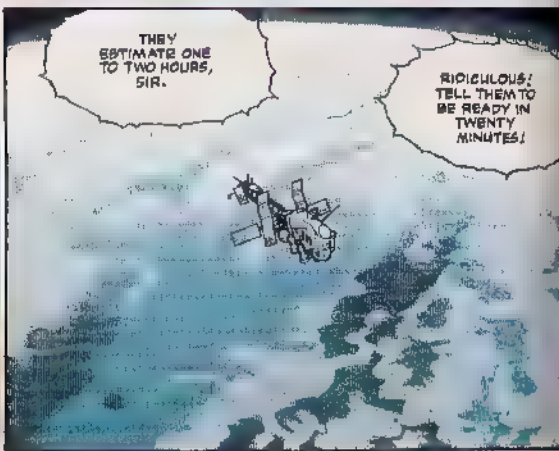
"FLOYD" IS
ENTERING
ORBITAL
RANGE.



RIGHT ON
SCHEDULE.

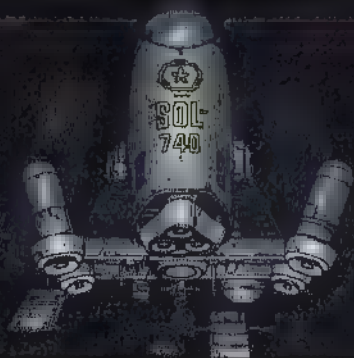


HOW SOON WILL THEY BE
READY TO
FIRE?

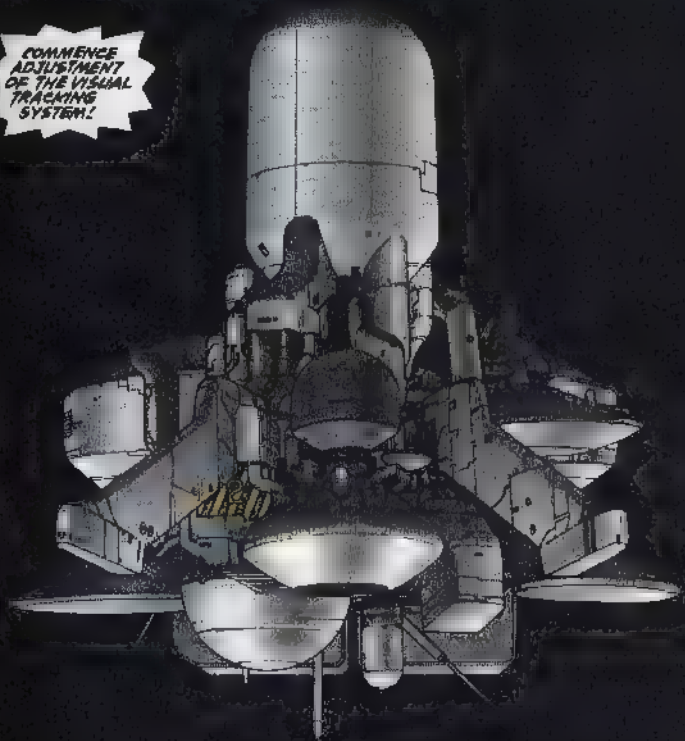


THEY
ESTIMATE ONE
TO TWO HOURS,
SIR.

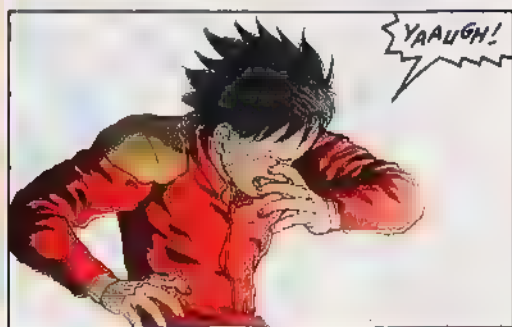
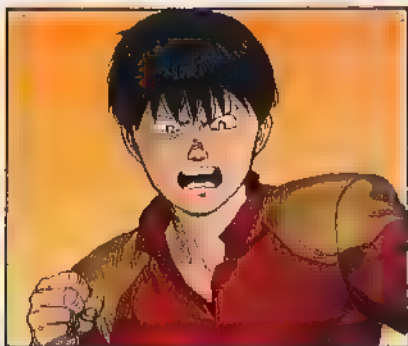
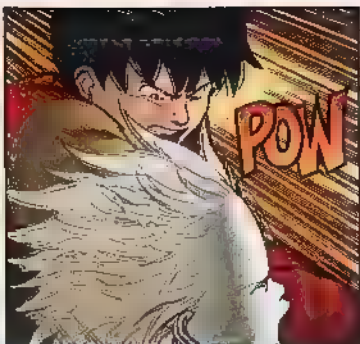
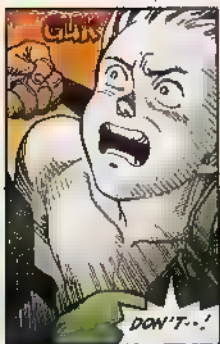
RIDICULOUS!
TELL THEM TO
BE READY IN
TWENTY
MINUTES!



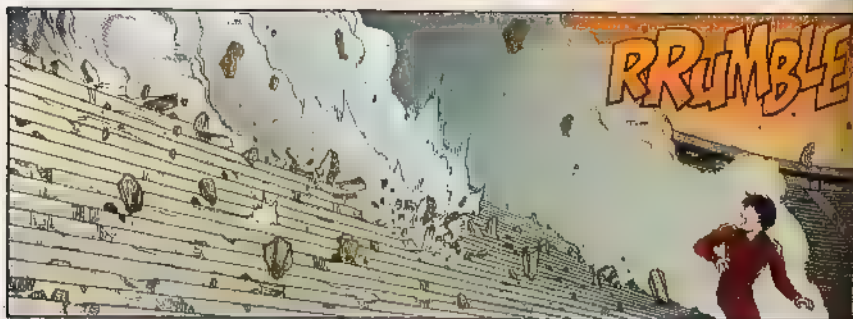
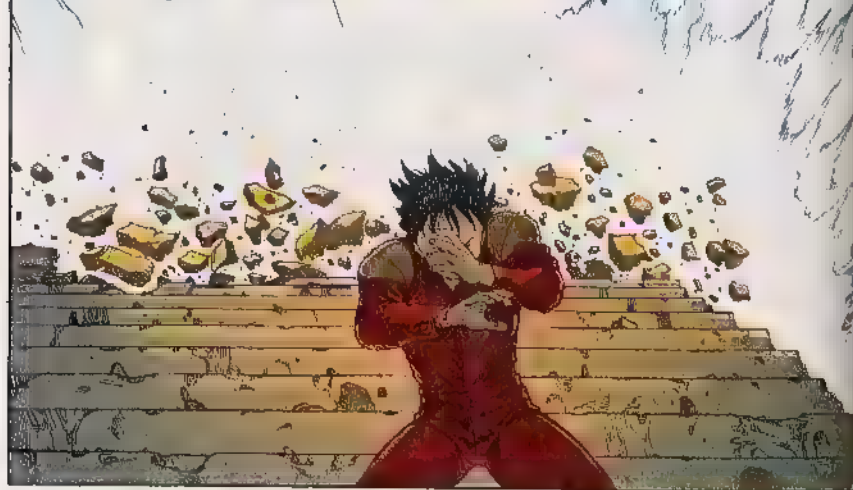
COMMENCE
ADJUSTMENT
OF THE VISUAL
TRACKING
SYSTEM!

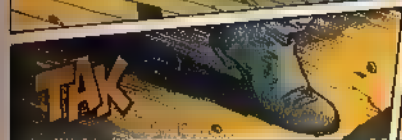
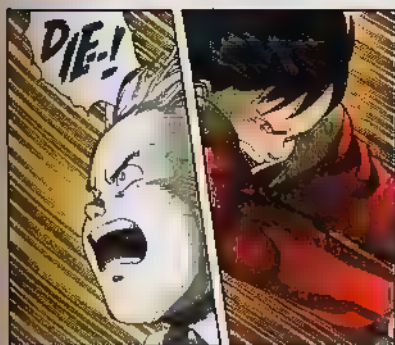
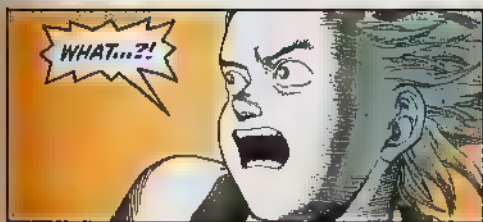


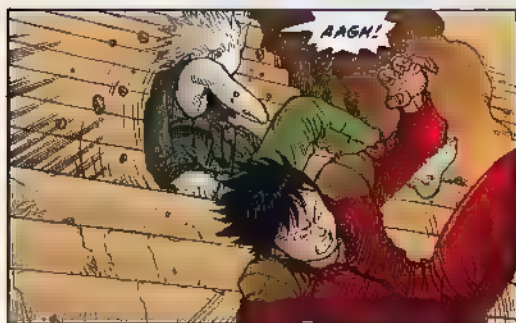
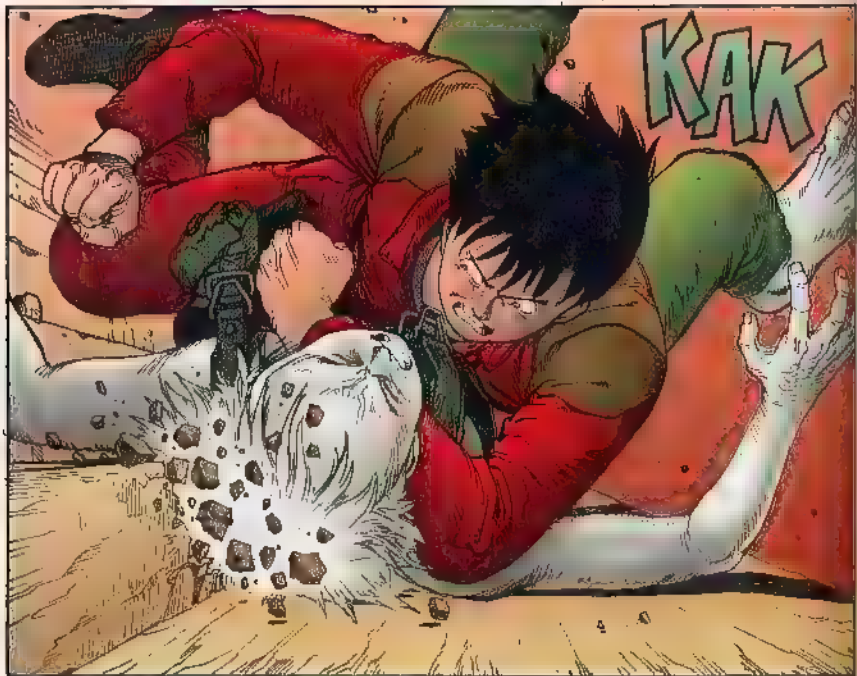




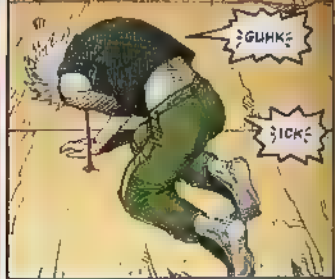
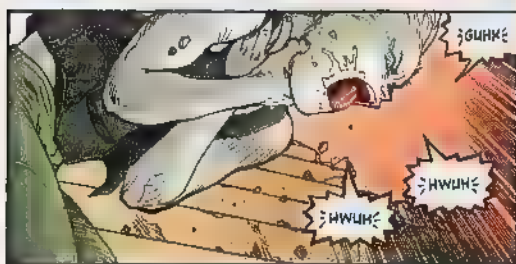
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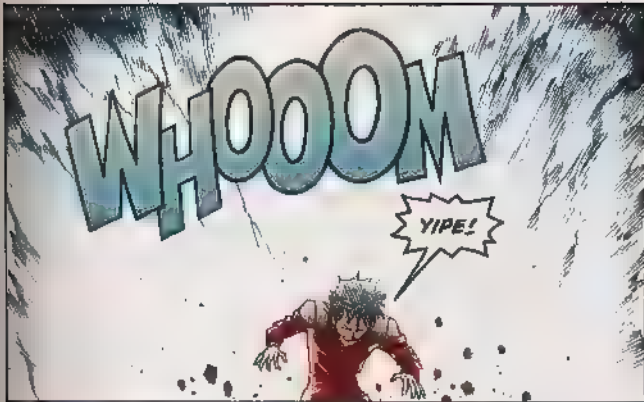


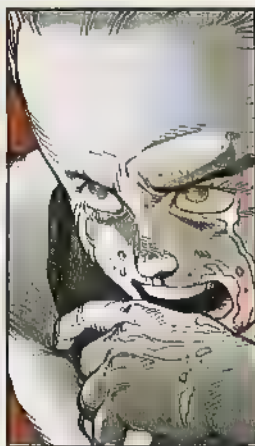
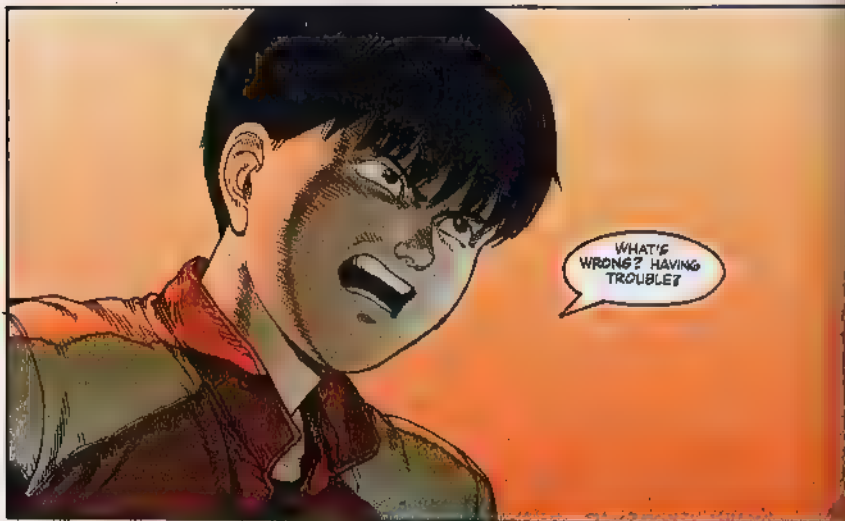


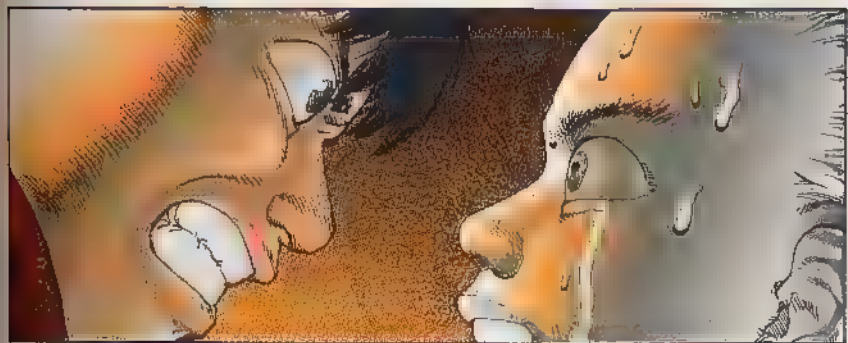
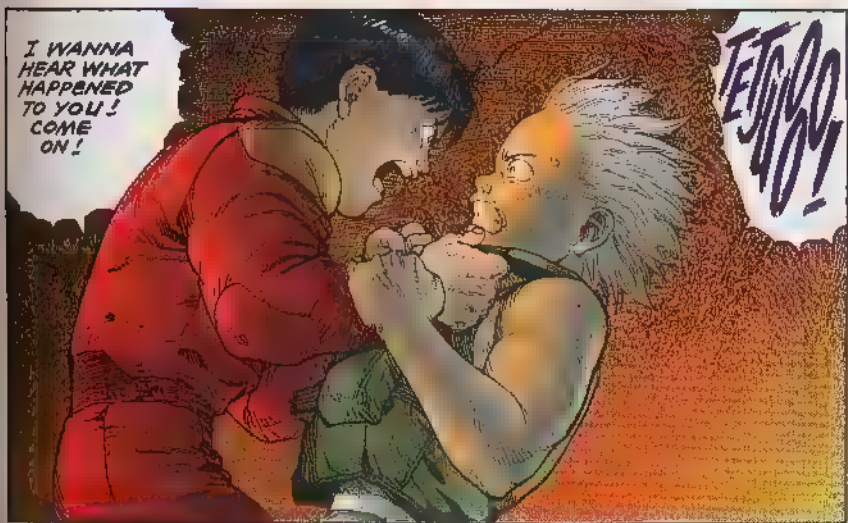
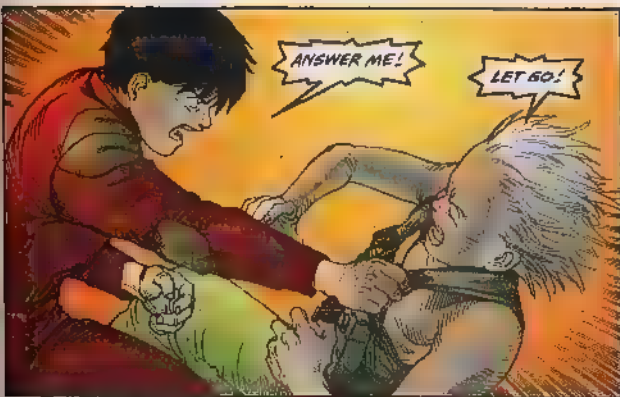


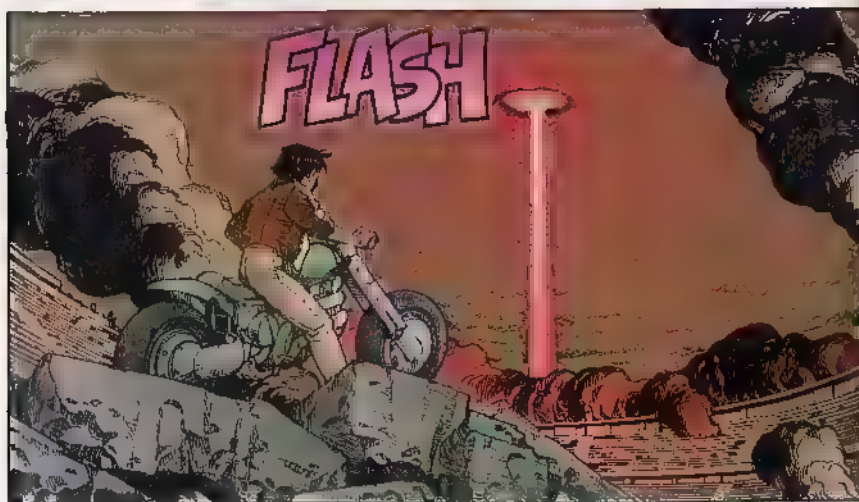
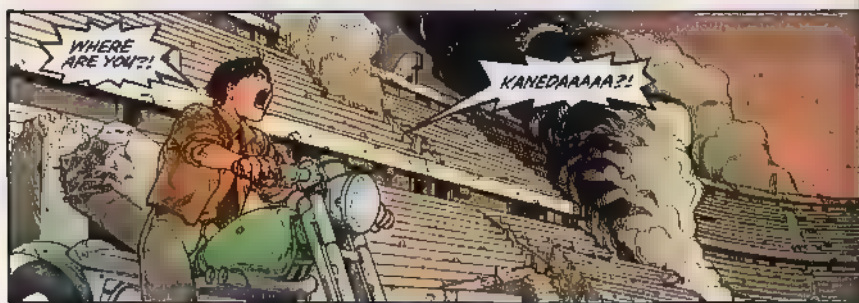
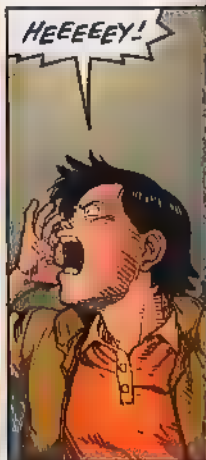
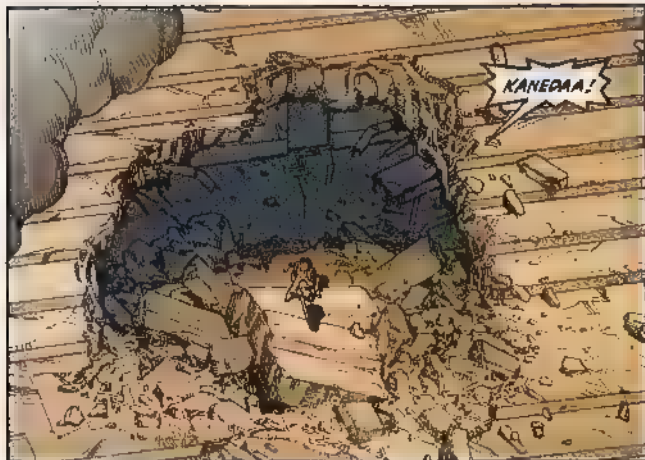
I HOPE YOU CHOKE!

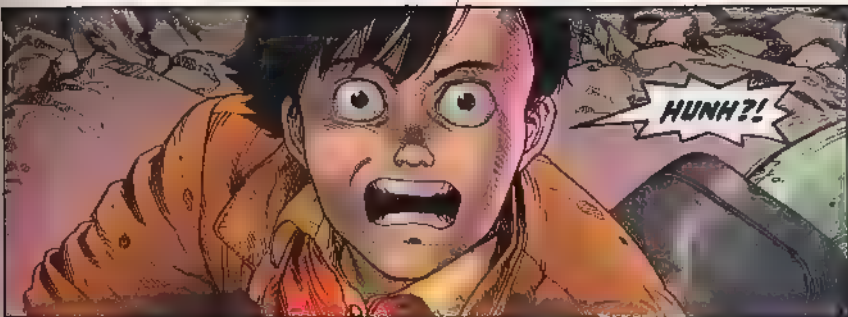


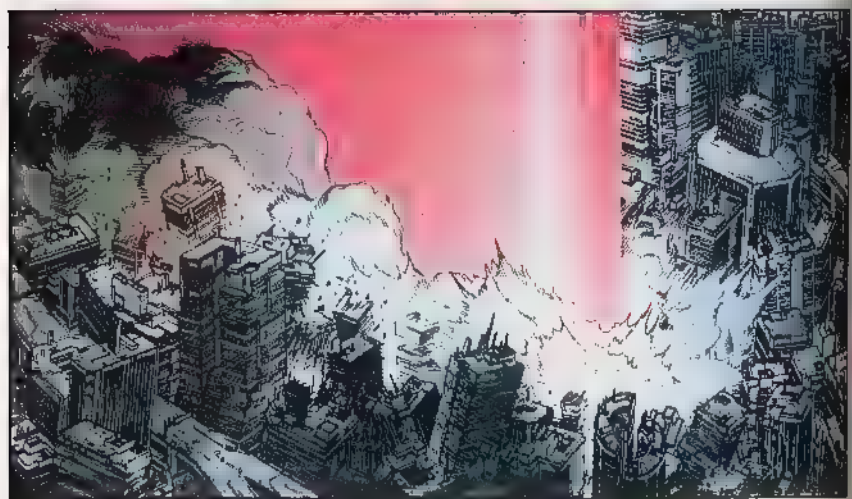
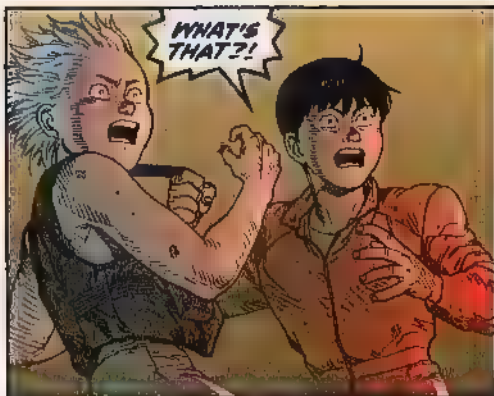


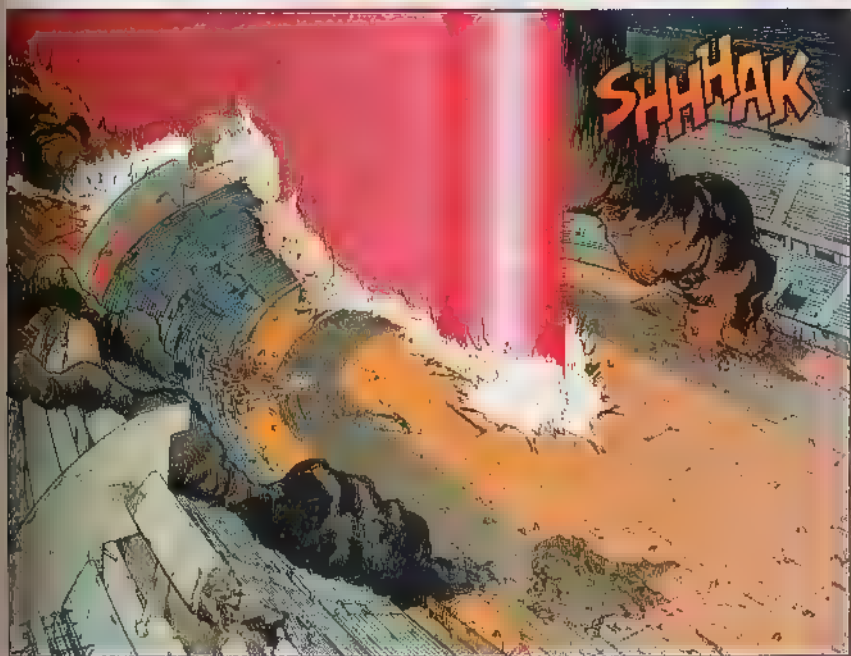
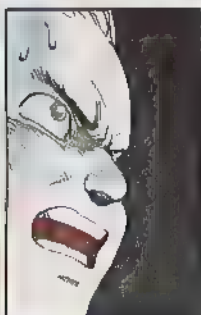
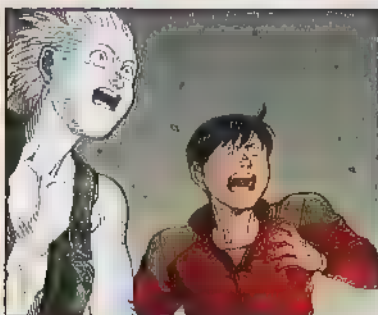
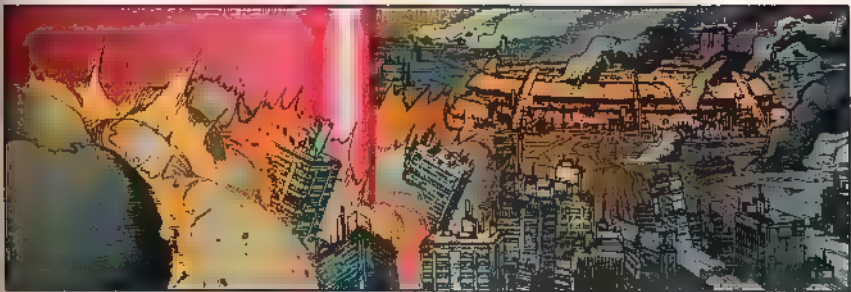


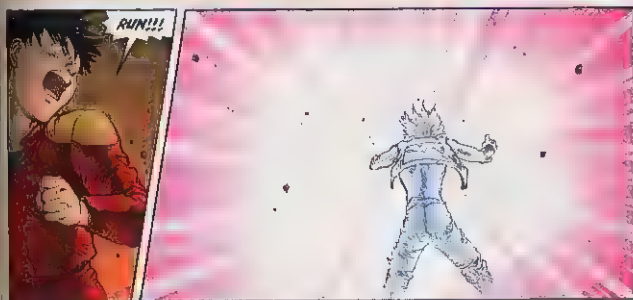


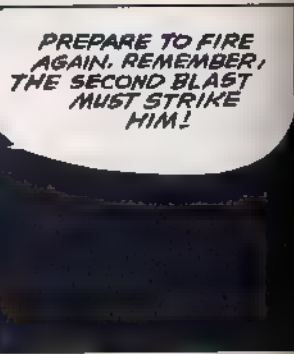
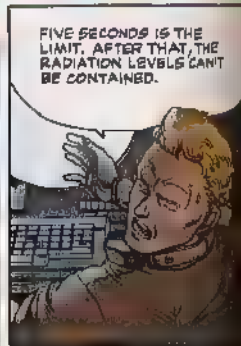
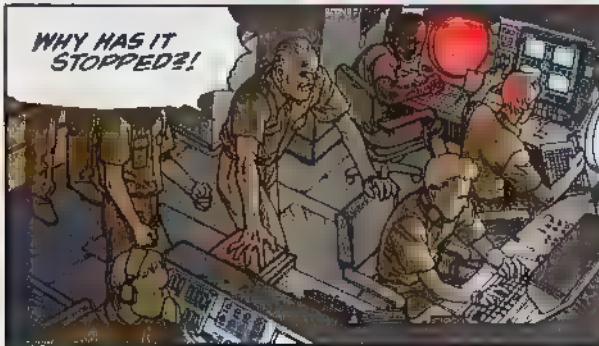


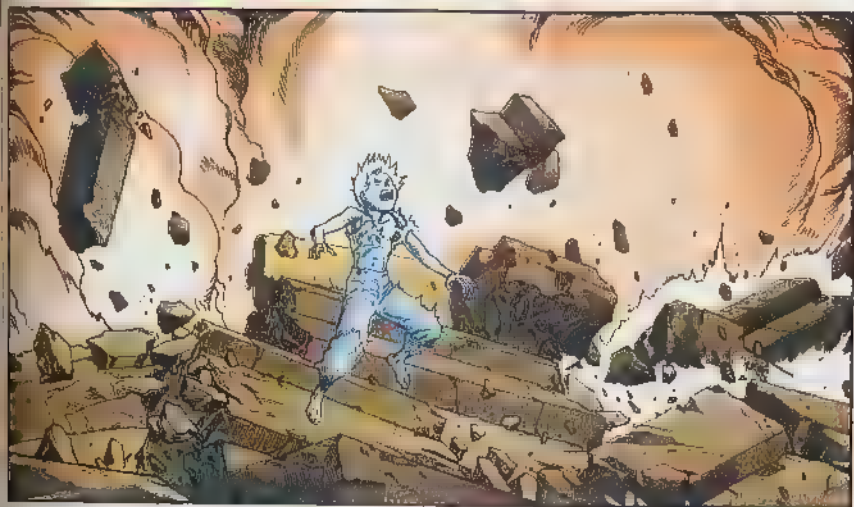
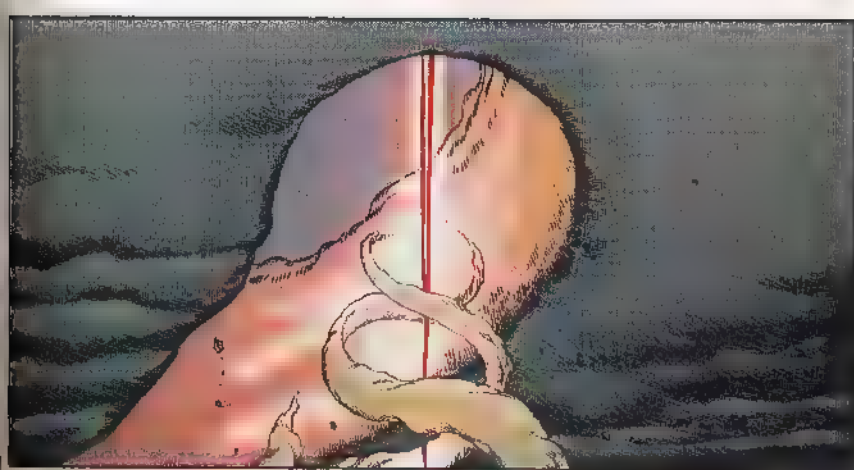


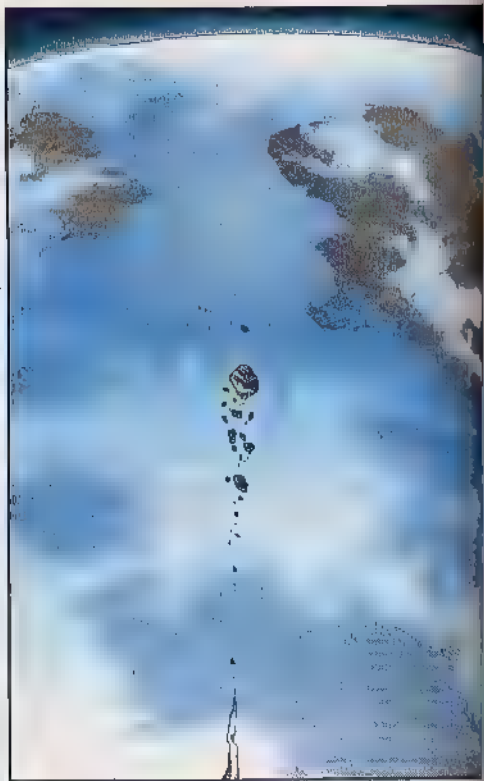
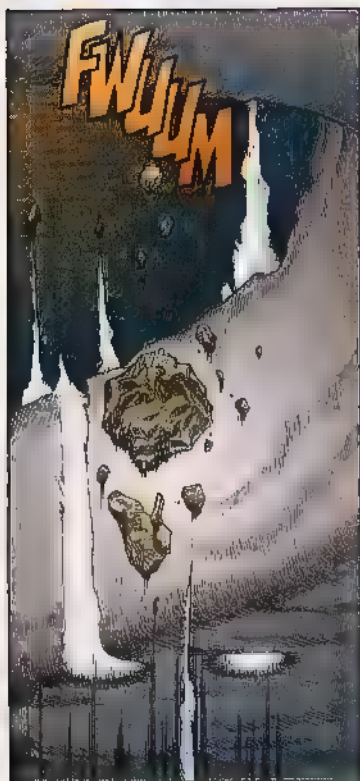
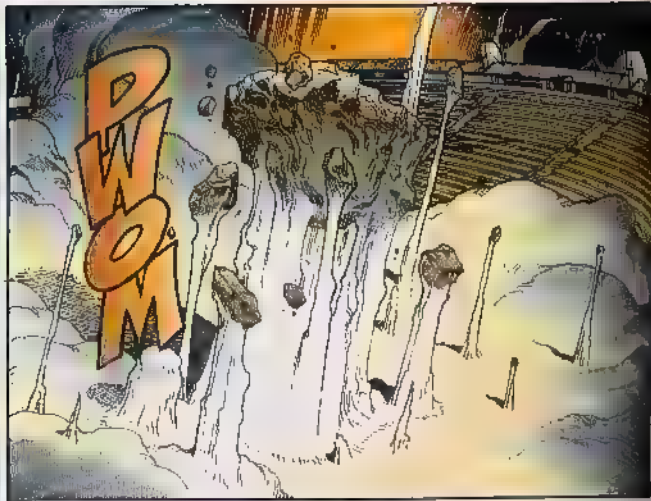
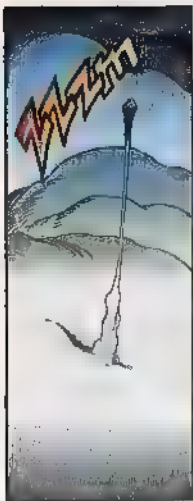


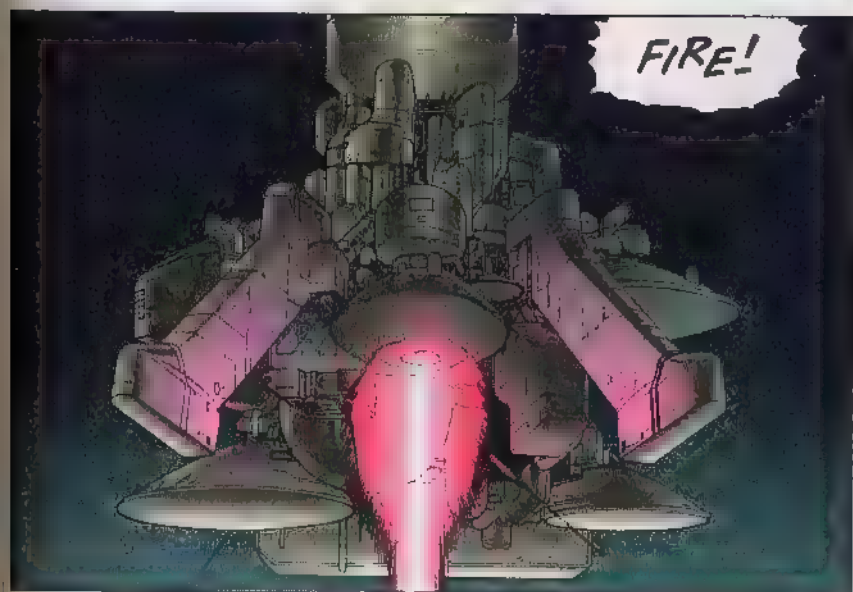
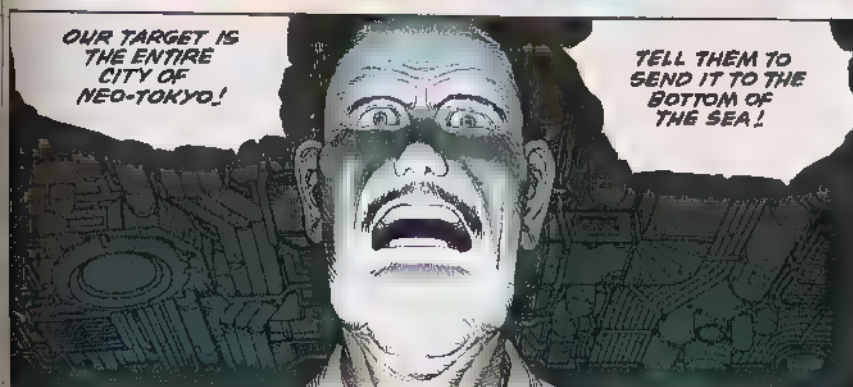
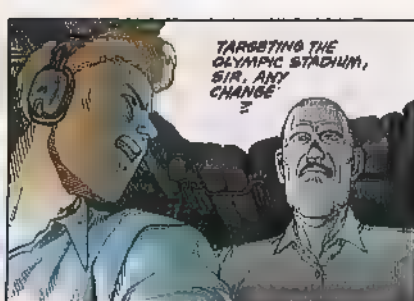


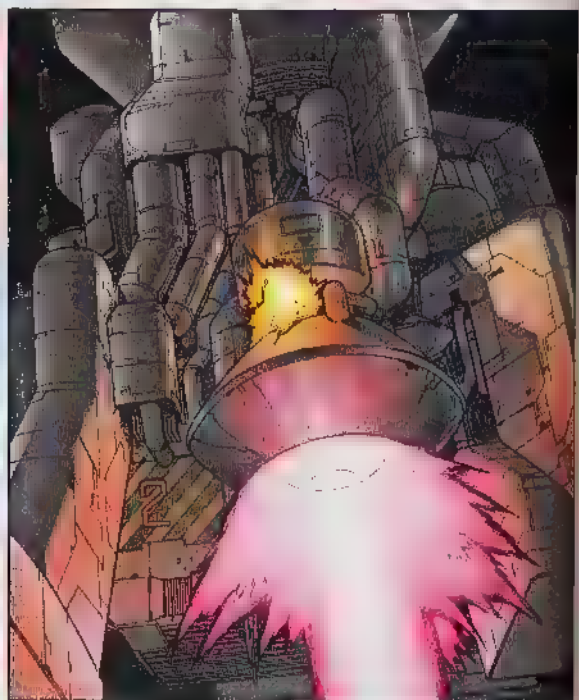
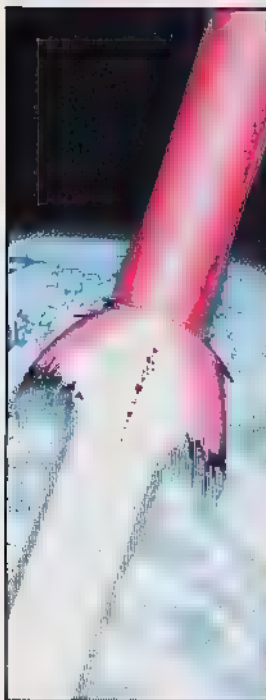
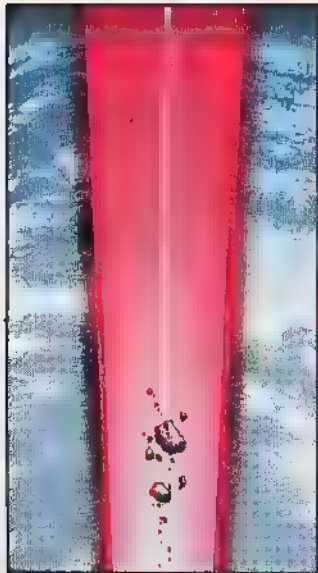


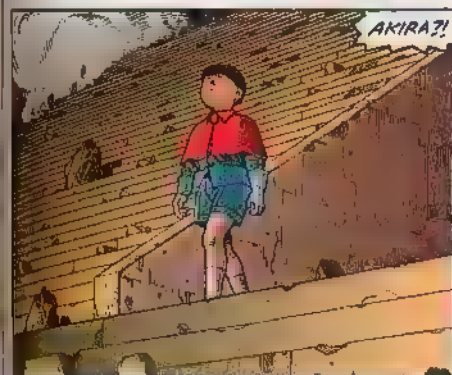
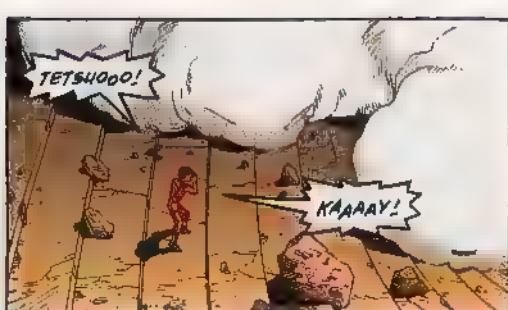


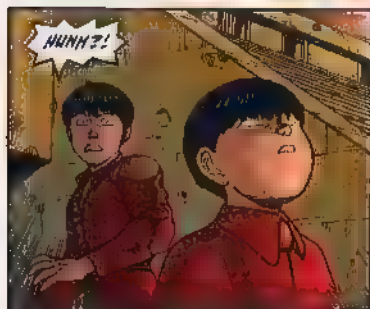


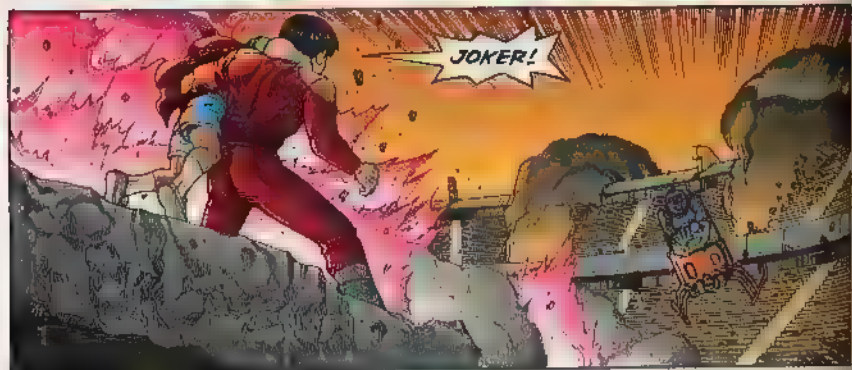
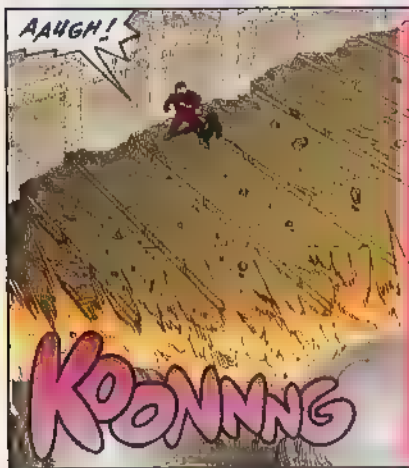


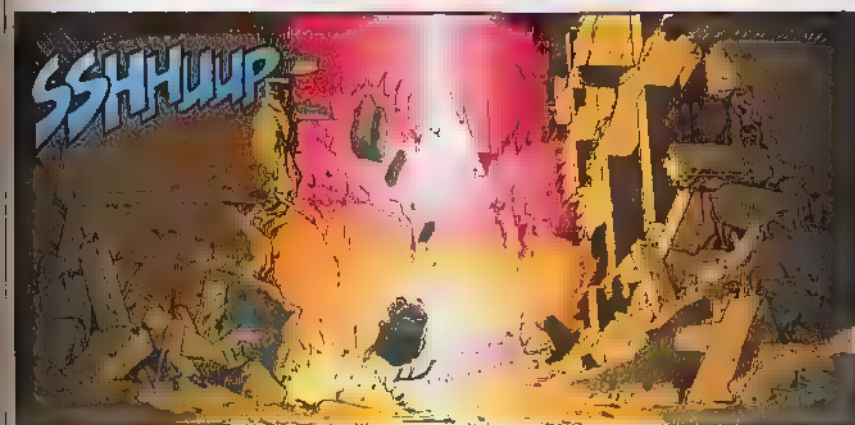
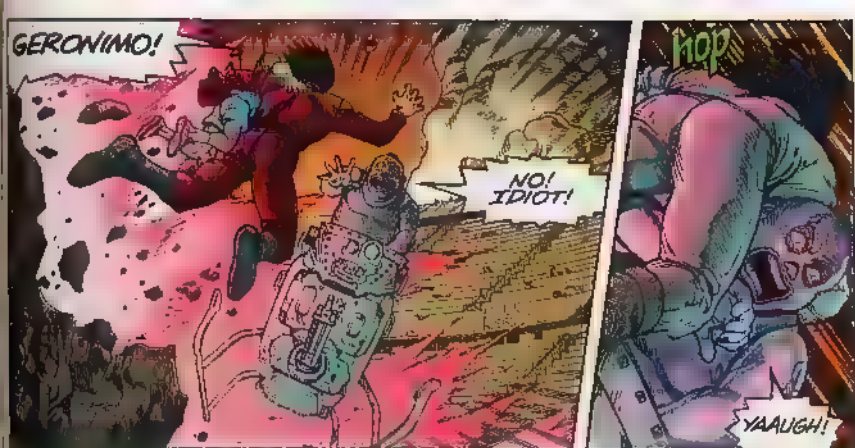


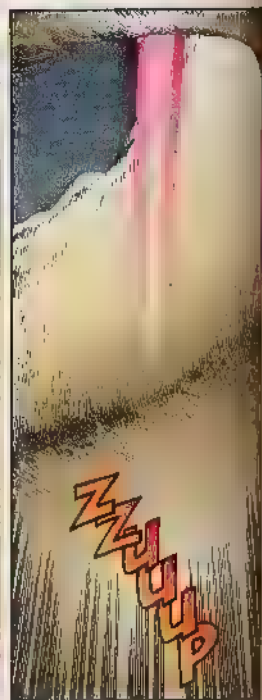
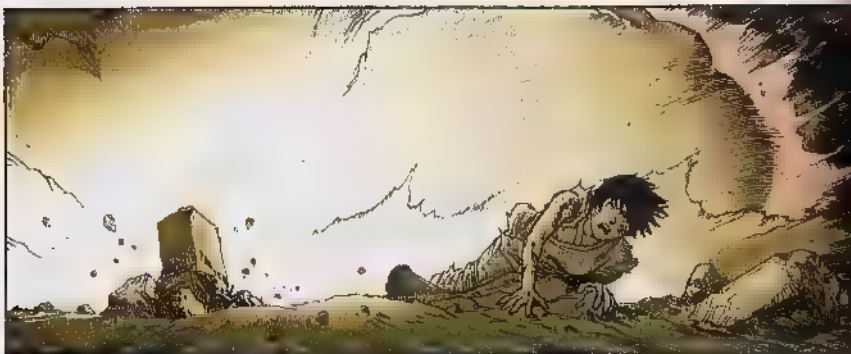


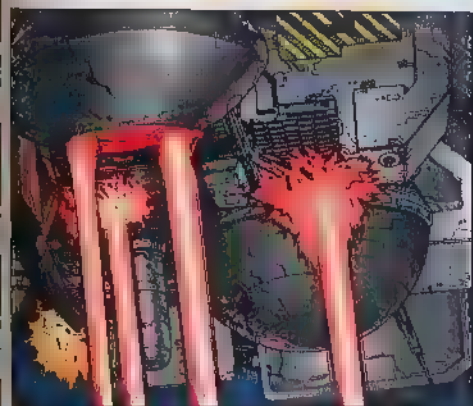
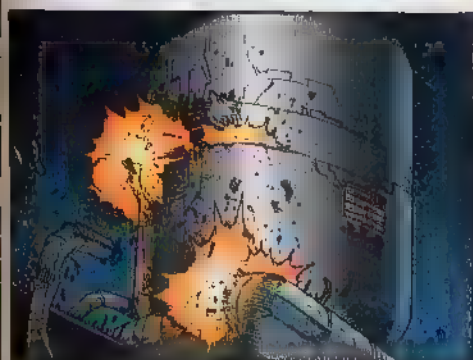
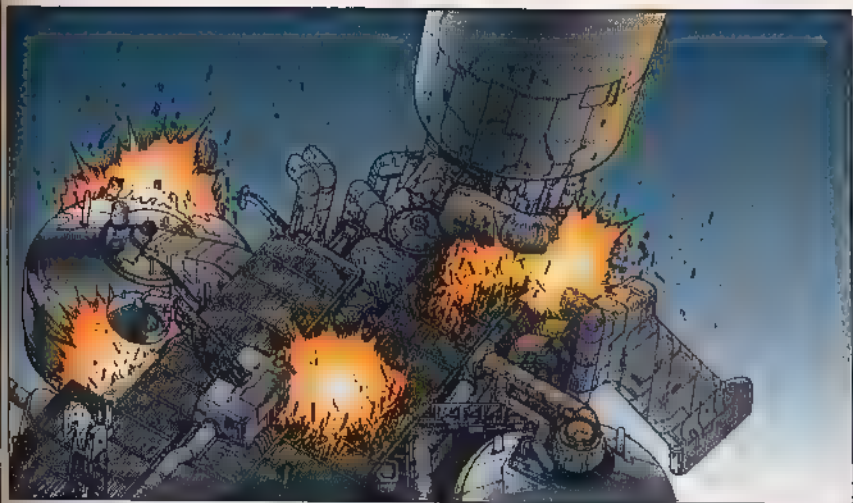


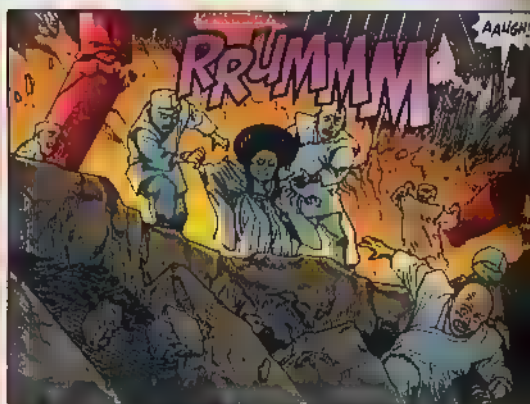
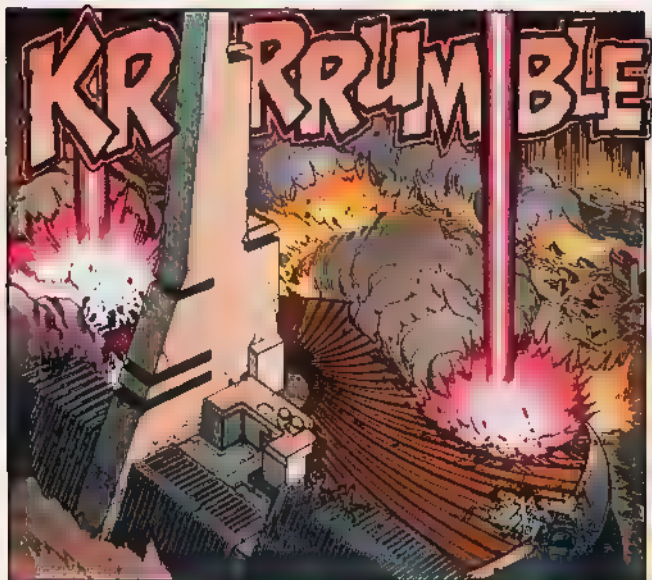












AAIEEE!

ZASH

**WHAT'S
WRONG?**

**FLOYD WENT OUT OF
CONTROL, AND THEN
THE RADIO PANEL
BURST
INTO FLAMES!**

**RIDICULOUS!
EXTINGUISH
THE FIRE
AND GET THAT
SATELLITE
BACK UNDER
CONTROL!**

**ADMIRAL! I'M
GETTING A
READING
HERE!**

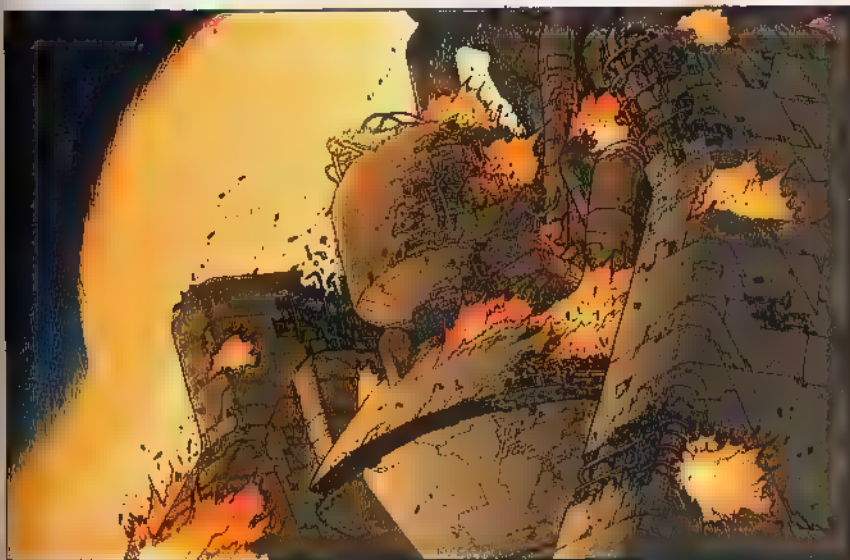
**WHAT DOES
IT SHOW?**

**FLOYD IS
LEAVING
ORBIT,
SIR!**

**IMPOSSIBLE! HOW
COULD
IT?**

IT'S FALLING.



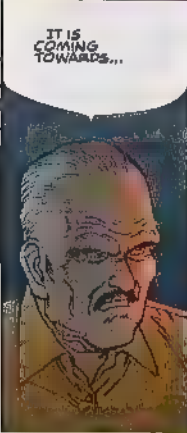




**WHAT DID
YOU SAY?**



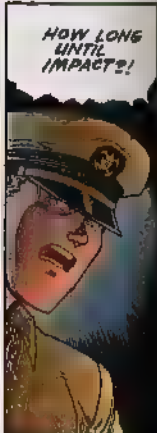
**FLOYD IS FALLING DIRECTLY
TOWARD THE FLEET.**



**IT IS
COMING
TOWARDS...**



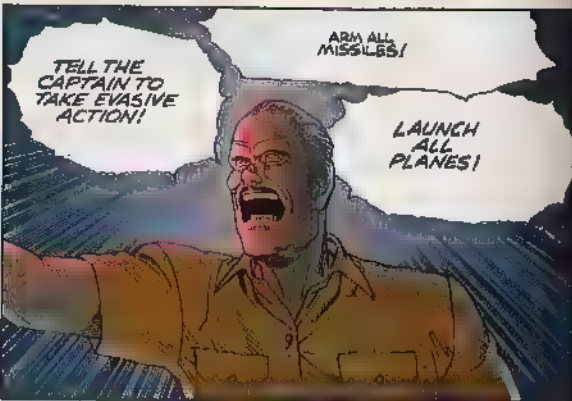
...THIS SHIP.



**HOW LONG
UNTIL
IMPACT?!**



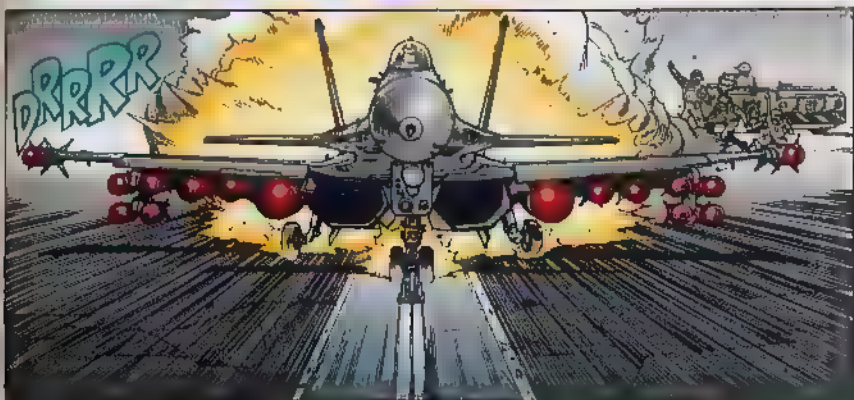
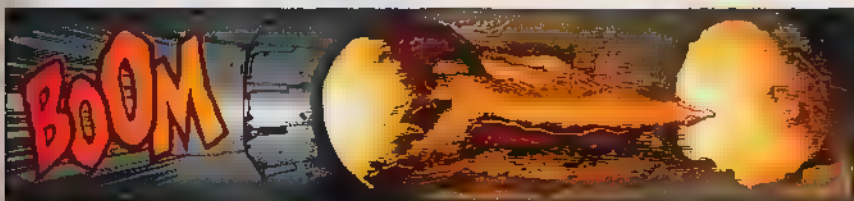
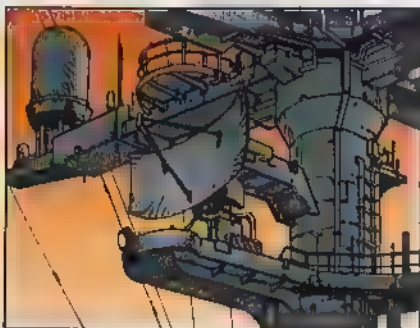
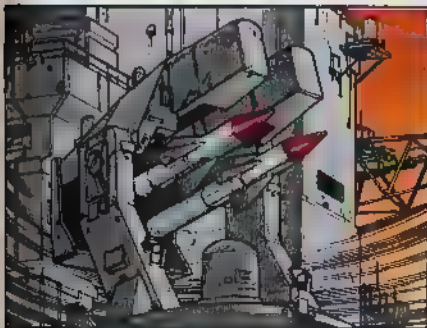
**AT THE CURRENT RATE OF
DESCENT, THIRTY
MINUTES, MAYBE
LESS.**



**TELL THE
CAPTAIN TO
TAKE EVASIVE
ACTION!**

**ARM ALL
MISSILES!**

**LAUNCH
ALL
PLANES!**



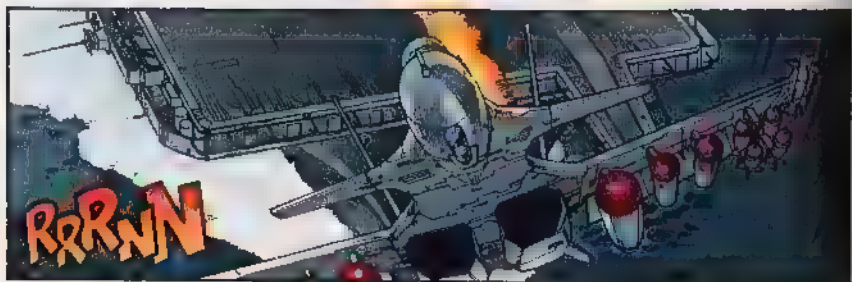
WE'LL NEED
A HELICOPTER TO
EVACUATE THE
SCIENTISTS.



WE'RE TRYING
TO LOCATE ONE
NOW, SIR...
PERHAPS YOU
COULD ALL LEAVE
TOGETHER
...?



ARE YOU SUGGESTING I
ABANDON SHIP? UNDER
FIRE? RIDICULOUS!



WHAT??

JUVENILE A



WE'RE BEING EVACUATED?
WHY?

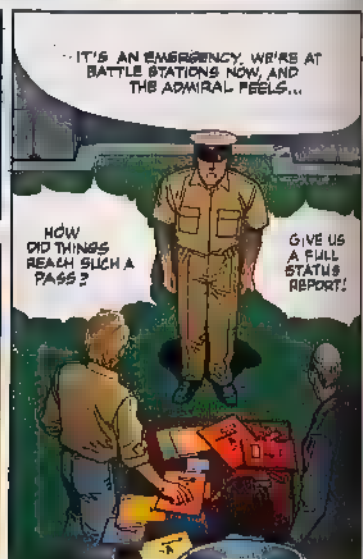
ON WHOSE ORDERS?



...IT'S AN EMERGENCY. WE'RE AT
BATTLE STATIONS NOW, AND
THE ADMIRAL FEELS...

HOW
DID THINGS
REACH SUCH A
PASS?

GIVE US
A FULL
STATUS
REPORT!



I'M AFRAID
THAT...

I'M NOT IN
A POSITION
TO ANSWER

NOT LONG ENOUGH.

ALREADY
IT IS HERE
WITH
US!

HOW LONG
HAVE WE?

KARMA
TANGI!

THE BRIDGE IS DANGEROUS,
ADMIRAL. AT LEAST GO
TO THE CONTROL ROOM!

NEVER
MIND THAT!
WHAT'S FLOYD'S
CURRENT
ALTITUDE?

62 MILES, AND IT'S TRAVELING
AT 650 MILES PER HOUR,
AND WILL ENTER THE
ATMOSPHERE ALMOST
VERTICALLY...

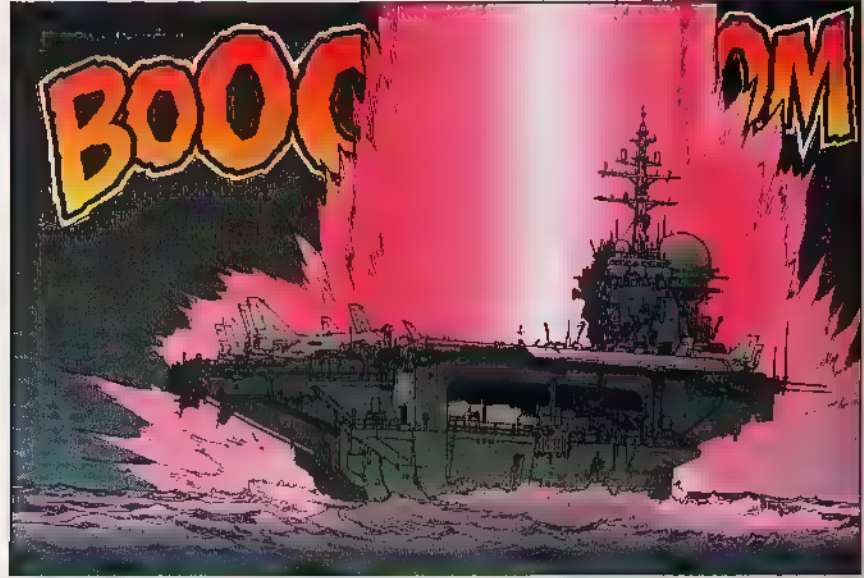
SHHHUM

85

FLASH

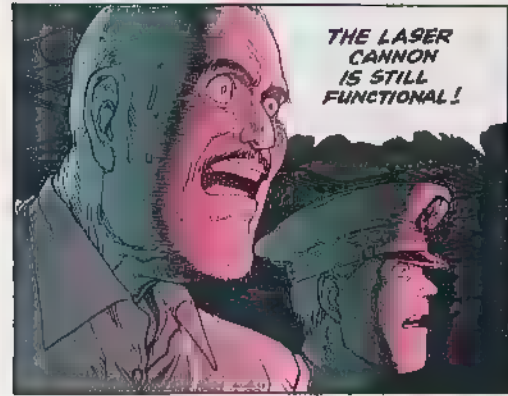


BOOM



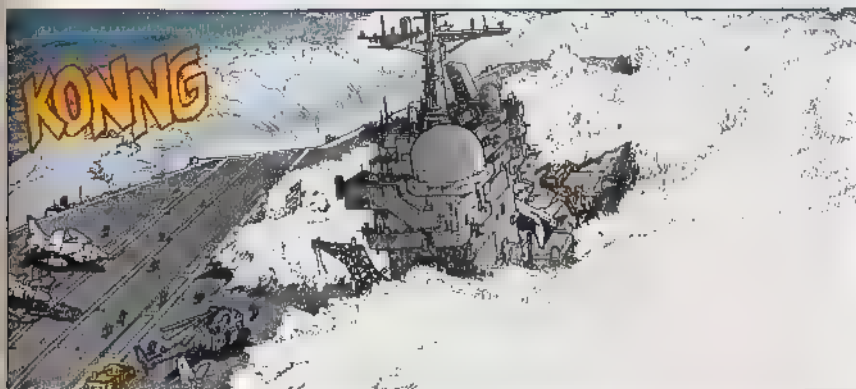
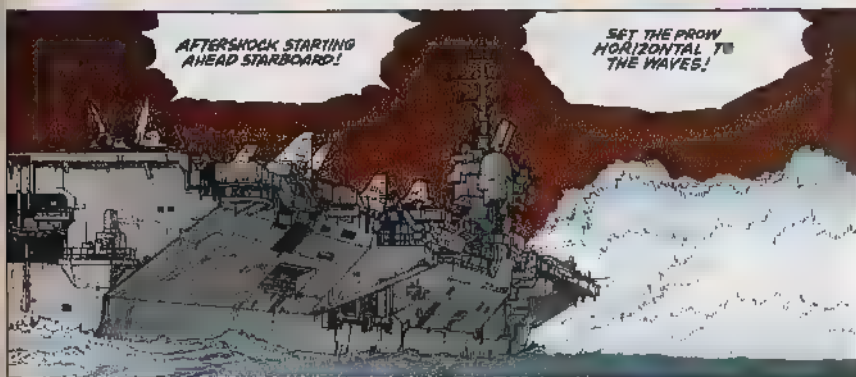
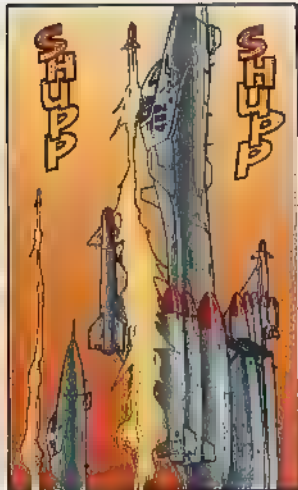
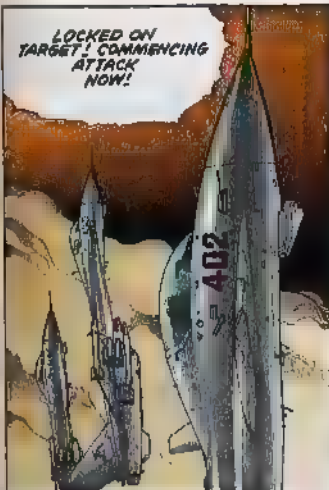
BOOM

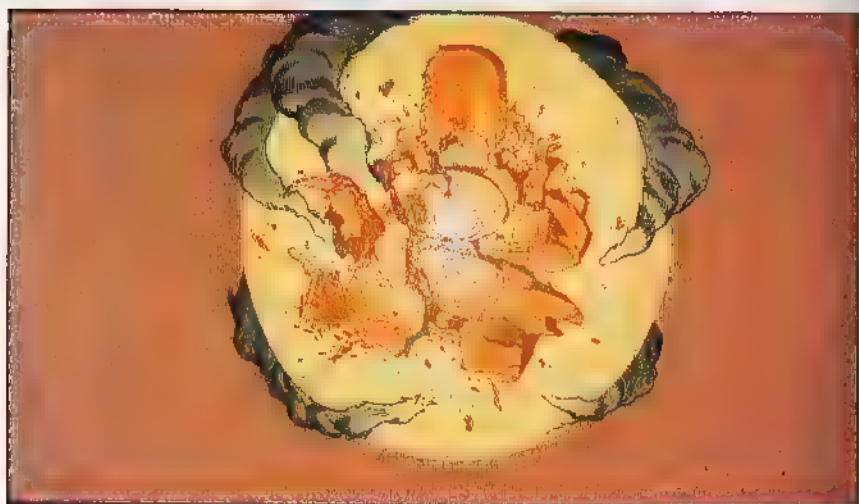
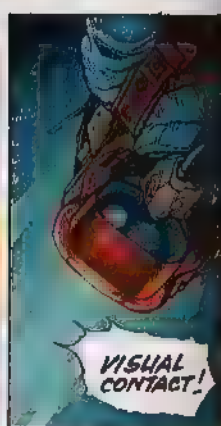
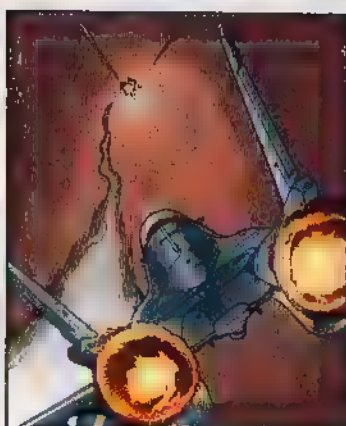
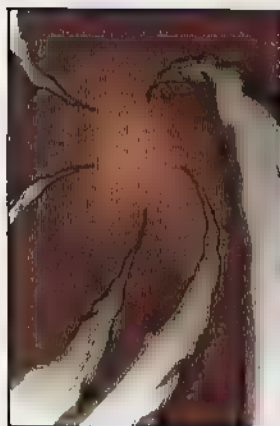
THE LASER
CANNON
IS STILL
FUNCTIONAL!

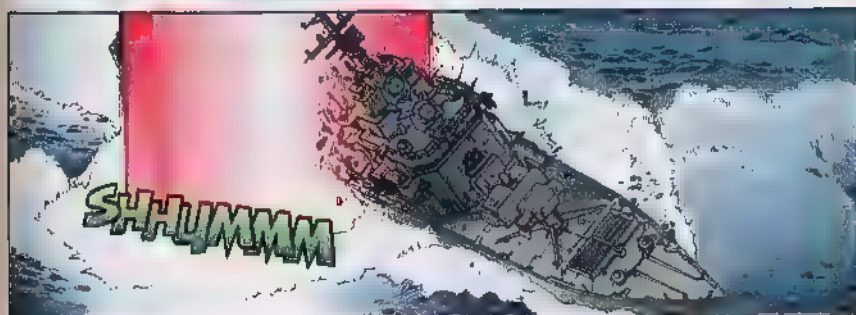
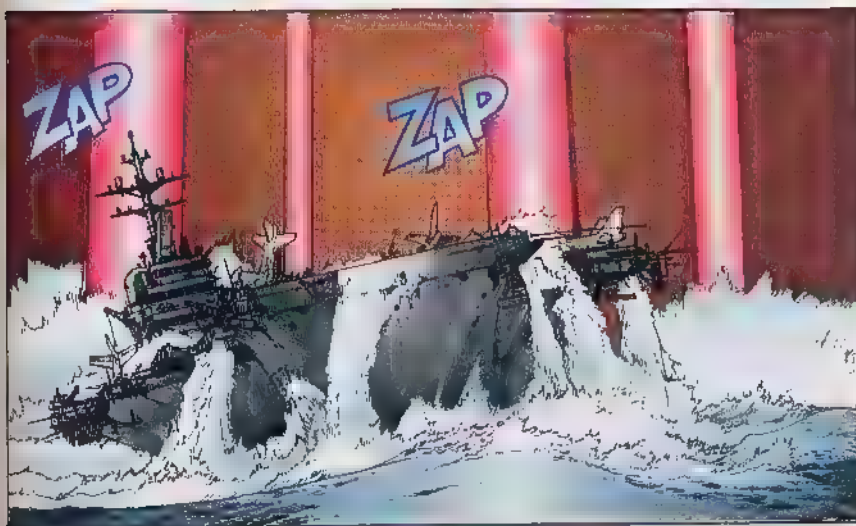
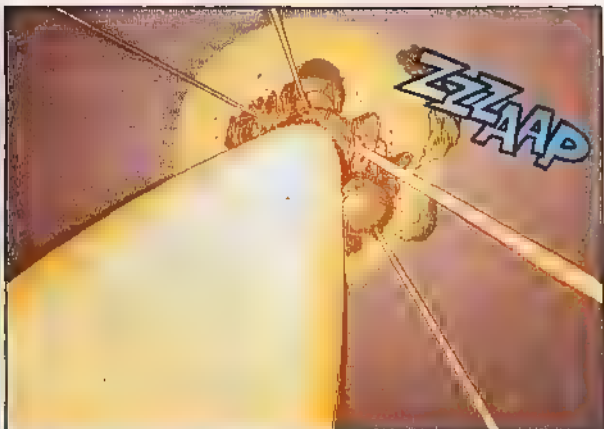


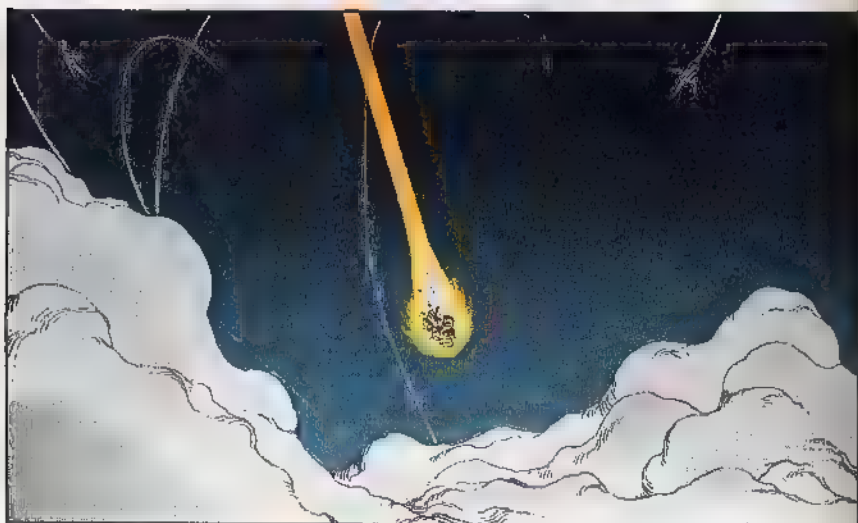
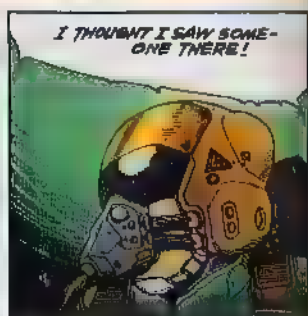
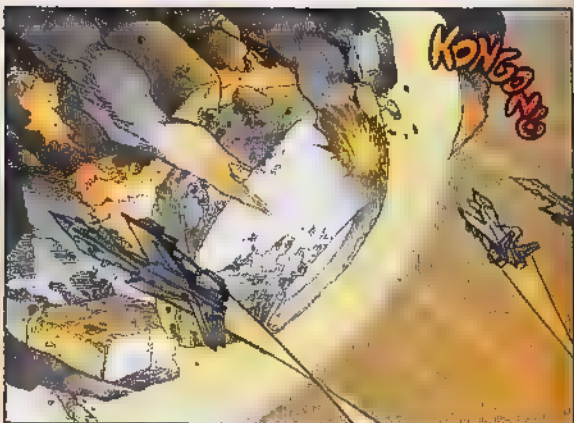
WHERE'RE OUR
PLANES? TELL
THEM TO
COUNTER-
ATTACK!





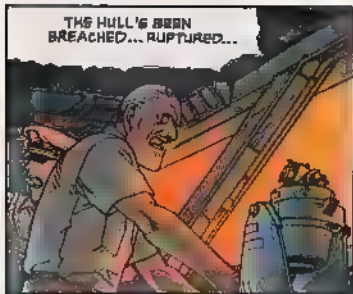




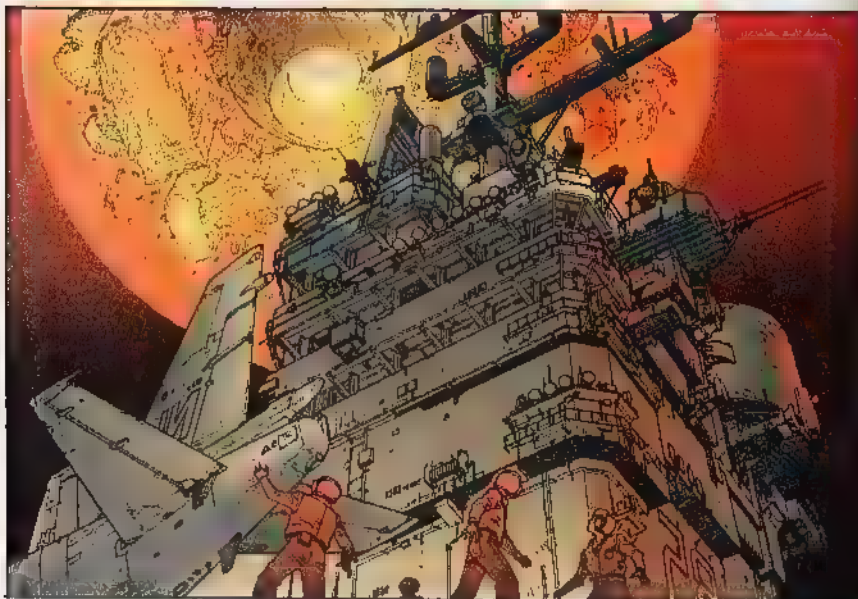




THE HULL'S BEEN
BREACHED... RUPTURED...

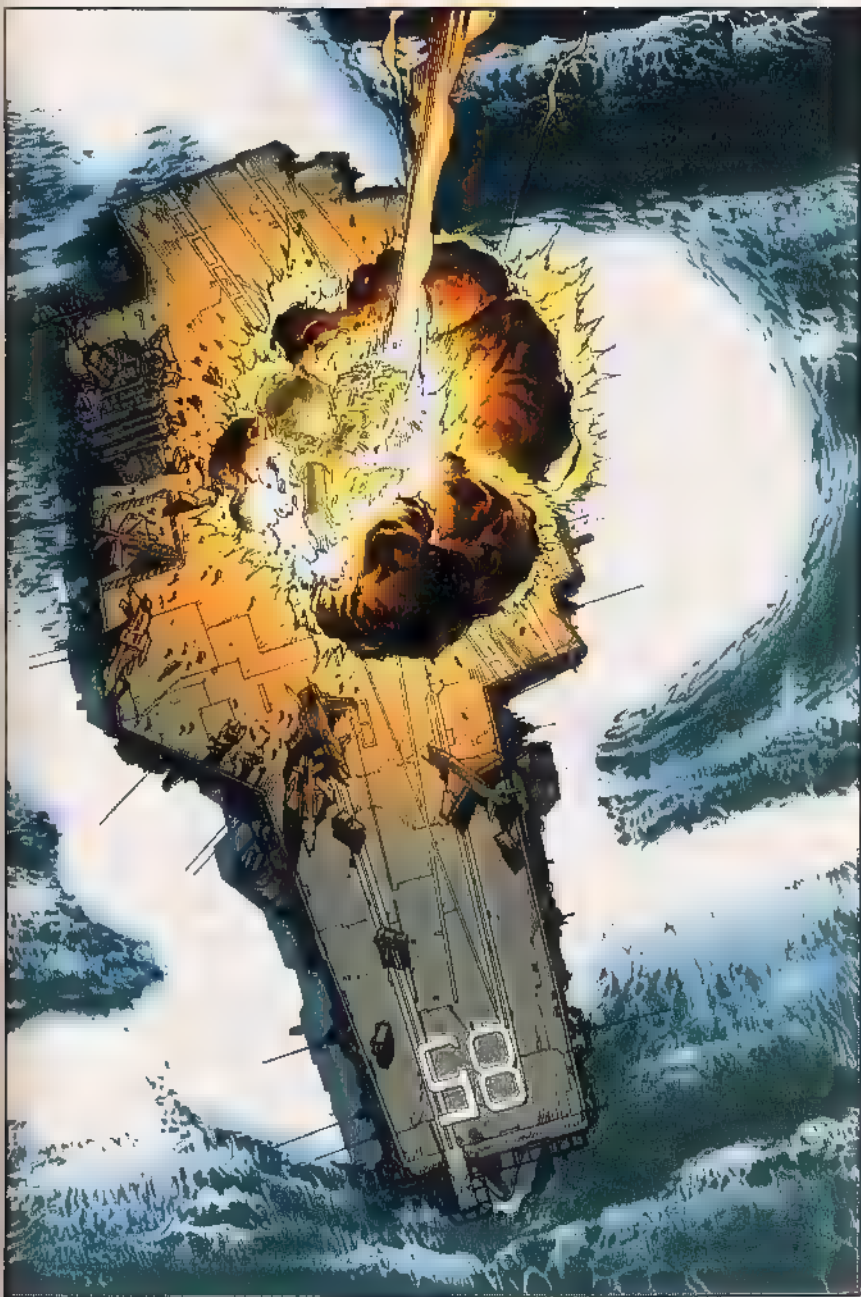


IT'S GOING
TO HIT!



MISSILES... FIRE
ALL...





AKIRA: readers respond

Over the years, Epic Comics has received hundreds of letters from **Akira** fans everywhere. Below is a look at **Akira** through the eyes of its supporters.

I picked up **Akira** #1 today and read it. I found the translation to be clean, smooth and articulated without sacrificing the integrity of the original. I was able to handle the coloring at first glance. I now feel that the colors have added another dimension to the original; a tantalizing variation on a theme.

Thank you for a great job!

— Jeffrey C.F. Wong
Aurora, Colorado

Yesterday I purchased **Akira** #1, and I must say that I am impressed. I had heard of this comic nearly two years before, but knew nothing about it, except that it was supposedly very good. Then, just yesterday I walked into my local comics store and saw the first issue on the shelves. The art stunned me and the color melded perfectly into a comic made for black and white. And the story! The terrific pacing revealed just enough to make me really want to find out more. If the other issues are only one-third as good as this one, **Akira** could easily become one of my favorite comics.

— Richard Clark
Pasadena, California

Epic comics has done a truly great thing by translating and adapting **Akira** for American release. The colorization of Mr. Otomo's work is also an excellent idea. I hope that **Akira** will meet with the success that it so richly deserves.

— David B. Mitchell
Berkeley, California

As a collector of translated Japanese Manga, I was horrified when I learned that you would be coloring **Akira**, which I believed would damage the quality of the artwork. I was most happily surprised by your end results. Otomo's work lends itself well to color and your team has done an excellent job of capturing the true sense of the title through the use of muted tones. I have found **Akira** to be an astounding comic and I applaud you for releasing it to the American public.

— Jason Huff
Greenwood, Indiana

Akira has grabbed me like no other comic. After 5 issues or so of the Epic **Akira**, I knew I was on to something special. I bought the Japanese versions, started subscribing to **Young Magazine** and ordered **Domu** and **Highway Star**.

— Woody Compton
Tallahassee, Florida

First we want to thank Mr. Otomo, Kodansha Ltd. and Epic Comics for introducing to the United States a superb manga, **Akira**. Secondly, we want to introduce ourselves: Jan C. — 35 years old, father; and Jan L. — 7 years old, son. We like **Akira** so much that we bought the movie at a recent Star Trek convention. What an outstanding story and a high quality production! We have discovered that we just can't seem to get enough of **Akira**.

— Jan C. and Jan L. Childress
Brooklyn, New York

Otomo may very well be the single best artist to come out of Japan. His work is not only more clear than many of the others I've seen, it also conveys action extremely well. He has a 3D quality in his work that gives the visual effects more of a punch than most artists. . . on either side of the globe.

— David Peattie
Concord, California

This is the most excellent comic I ever have seen! Katsuhiko Otomo rocks! Most high praises to all the Epic crew for this project! To tell you how excellent I think this book is — I am trying to learn Japanese 'cause you guys just can't translate **Akira** fast enough — plus I've got to get my hands on Otomo's other books.

— Duncan Clarke
Terre Haute, Indiana

I have always been an admirer of Japanese comic art, that is until I read **Akira #22**. I then became a fan of the stories as well.

You see, I had bought the issue strictly for the examples of manga art, which I intended to copy. I brought the issue home and opened it, having my Bristol board and art pencils next to me. The first three pages contained, as you know, a synopsis of what had happened previously. I figured I might as well read it for the background information.

I was engrossed. The tale of Akira, Kay, Kaneda and the others fascinated me. As I picked up my book, my eyes fell upon the first page of the story. Within 15 minutes, I had read the whole book. . . twice.

I gingerly opened the book to a page with excellent views and set out to copy your art style. 20 torn pages and four broken pencils later; I surrendered to the bare facts: the art was just plain too good. I read the book again. I was astonished at your attention to detail and your sense of proportion. Your writing was flawless.

So, Mr. Otomo, I would like to raise my hat to a brilliant writer, artist and creator. Thank you for **Akira** and thank you for your great contribution to the comic field.

— Jordan C. Beasley, age 11
Sacramento, California

... WOW! Reading this installment (**Akira #23**) was very much akin to the first time I sat in a Cinerama-equipped 3-projector movie theater and watched Stanley Kubrick's **2001: A Space Odyssey**. It's not everyday that I come across a comic book that really deserves to be called awe-inspiring.

— Henry R. Kujawa
Camden, New Jersey

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editor & production manager

RYOSHI KON

production assistant

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Kodansha, Ltd.

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HISATAKA NISHITANI

editor & production editor

YUKA ANDO

production manager & editor

NORiyUKI OKAZAKI

marketing & sales & New York

Epic Comics

JO DUFFY

english adaptation

STEVE DUFF

with me

OLYPTICS COMPUTER CREW

computer's

MICHAEL HIGGINS

with LAURA BRADY

lettering

MAHE JAVINS

editor

CARL POTTS

executive editor

From high above, Neo-Tokyo ceases to be a city of the living, becoming instead a target for the soon to be dead. American bombers drop terrible payloads toward the ravaged streets as weapon platforms dance at the edge of space, firing arcane rays of hi-tech destruction down on a battlefield of men and something more than man. From below, the telekinetic power that is Tetsuo rages to be unleashed anew, promising awesome revenge for this latest attack from nations fearful of the unknowable might that is Akira.

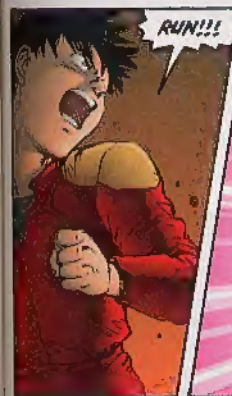
And trapped between the heavens and hell on earth, an anxious humanity all too aware of their own mortality.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA







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I love um

I buy um

I preserve um